WORKS IN PROGRESS

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The Great Olympia Busker Parade

Dana Walker

One of several quite wonderful outcomes that came about as a result of the Great Olympia Free Concert/Busker Parade Traveling Circus Extravaganza Extraordinaire was the fact that several dozen folks that I have never seen before — and mostly 20-something kids at that — joined us as we first seized possession of 4th Ave and then over¬whelmed City Hall to vent a little righteously indignant outrage and to have the time of our lives.

First, I outed myself by signing a permit so we could have a completely legal free concert in Sylvester Park. The organization of the Free Concert was a bit of a mess; the GA people had not turned on the power, there were no amps, the music-organizer and keeper of the schedule wasn't there, and the whole thing was an hour-an-a-half late starting. However, with but a couple of exceptions everyone had a great time anyway, so it was all good. There were several awesome performances by several musicians. There was acoustic solo stuff from Aaron and Red Emma, some rap from Seattle's 12-12, one of the best harmonica players I have ever heard, a trombone, and a hard-

Photo by Dana Walker

core punk performance by a band called Outlook.

Background here: I have known Adriana, Outlook's vocalist, for about a year. She was one of our fellow occupiers of the Capitol Building last spring. I have always found her to be a brilliant level-headed and definitively un-dramatic young lady. She is either a high-school teacher or a teacher's aide of some sort, I forget which. I had never seen her perform before. Adriana's performance at the Free Concert stir-fried my brain in gunpowder and then lit the fuse. Awe-inspiring would not be an overly dramatic description.

Outlook was the band that several of the new kids had come to see. Toward the end of their set, Outlook's guitar player — who has told me his name twice and I have forgotten it both times — made some powerful observations about who downtown really belongs to and he then recited a fire-breathing history of the abusive laws and policies that had been practiced in Olympia for decades now. Their fans were pumped and primed.

Then, the parade started. [An hour late, of course, but that was all good too.] About 60 or 70 of us — which turned into 70 or 80 of us by the end as people along the way saw us and gleefully joined in — took possession of our downtown streets during rush hour. We were playing music. We were dancing and singing. We had a small army of kids handing out informational flyers. We had a clown directing traffic. We toured the "designated busking zones" illustrating by first-hand observation how utterly useless three of the four zones are.

Then — we paraded up Capitol Way and occupied the mighty 4th Avenue itself!

This is the strategic heart of our beloved city! *This* was the prime busker turf! *This* is a distillation of the *Eau dé Olympia*, this weird highly entertaining magical place that we live.

4th Ave was ours!

We *could* have stopped here and just rested upon our laurels. We *could* have settled for the symbolic gesture of having seized 4th Ave. This would have been enough to let the Machine know that the People would not be silenced. We *could* have honourably withdrawn at that point having powerfully made our statement — but we had our eyes on the *prize*, children! We were aiming for the very nerve center of the Olympia Downtown Machine:

We were en-route to City Hall!

We arrived without challenge or incident. By coincidence there happened to be a City Council meeting scheduled. ;-P Our drums simultaneously announced our arrival and greeted the arriving council critters. Our Song reverberated a merry greeting throughout the enchanted Downtown Olympia twilight.

A small phalanx of police had been awaiting our arrival just inside the big glass entryway to the City Hall. They seemed somewhat dismayed that there were so many of us and that we had all appeared so suddenly and so noisily. Several of them hurriedly moved to some more strategic locations. Our

▸ **BUSKERS,** continued on page 3

Guess who's behind the lawsuit against the Co-op?

WIP News Service

On Friday, September 9, lawyers for five members of the Olympia Food Co-op filed a lawsuit in Thurston County Superior Court, seeking damages from 15 current and former Co-op board members. The expressed goal of the lawsuit is to punish the 15 defendants for involvement in the passage of the Co-op's historic boycott of Israeli goods last year. The defendants include every current member of the Co-op's Board of Directors, including four new members who were not on the board when the boycott was enacted, as well as four former members who no longer have decision-making power at the Co-op.

Months before filing the lawsuit, the five plaintiffs (Kent Davis, Linda Davis, Susan Mayer, Susan Trinin and Jeff Trinin) sent two threatening letters to each of the defendants. The letters made several references to "numerous procedural violations," without *ever once* identifying any single violation of any procedure. The five individuals claimed the boycott violated several Food Co-op policies, listing policies by name, but again without *ever once* identifying a single way in which any policy was violated. The plaintiffs then continued:

What is not mentioned in the lawsuit, or the letters to the board, is that the five upset individuals have had numerous potential remedies at their disposal.

A number of us have made [our] position clear to the Board since it announced its decision to enact the Israel Boycott. Yet our efforts have apparently fallen on deaf ears, as the Board steadfastly refuses to revisit its position on the Israel Boycott and Divestment policies.

The letter then summarized:

We are not interested in needlessly dragging ourselves or OFC [...] into an adversarial proceeding. That said, our informal efforts thus far—made in the spirit of cooperation that drew us to OFC in the first place—have failed to persuade you to do what is required under the circumstances. In short, you are entirely responsible for the position in which you now find yourselves. If you do what we demand, this situation may be resolved amicably and efficiently. If not, we will bring legal action against you, and this process will become considerably more complicated, burdensome, and expensive than it has been already.

▸ **CO-OP,** continued on page 14

WORKS IN PROGRESS

ESTABLISHED IN 1990 BY THE THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION

Works In Progress is a free, all volunteer-operated progressive community newspaper based in Olympia, Washington. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of *Works In Progress* and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions

Please send text as Word attachments. Artwork and photos can be sent electronically or we can scan them for you as camera-ready/black & white.

Works In Progress is committed to stories misrepresented or ignored by the mainstream media. We value local, well-researched news stories, accounts of personal experience and reflections by local authors. Opinion pieces, also valued, are often best supported by facts, examples, and sources, and we encourage writers to include these elements to submissions. We're also looking for graphics, poetry, cartoons, and articles that push the boundaries of conventional journalism.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number. Articles may be reprinted. Please cite sources.

If your issue isn't being covered in Works In Progress, *it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or haven't found someone else to cover it!)*

Send submissions to *olywip@gmail* or mail to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295.

Governing Tool

The following statement is part of the Editorial Policy and is the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause:

WIP *will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by* WIP *to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but* WIP *reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.*

Mission Statement

"Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. *Works In Progress* is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed."

Anti-Discrimination Clause

We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Back Issues

WIP is archived on microfilm by the University of Washington Library. Some issues are held in the Timberland Library system. The last five years are online at www.olywip.org

WORKERS IN PROGRESS

Jeff Berryhill	Creighton Rose
Ferdinand Bridges	Sandia Slaby
Marylea Coday	Sylvia Smith
Wally Cuddeford	Jeff Sowers
N Kay Harmon	Wendy Tanowitz
Teresa Jennings	Pat Tassoni
Joe Martineau	Tinker Belle
Bethel Prescott	Berd Whitlock
Maggie Reardon	Scott Yoos

Cover photo: Part of the mural painted at al-Shati Kindergarten in Gaza. This mural was based on an event in July, where children in Gaza broke the Guinness World Record for most kites flown simultaneously, with 13,000. (Photo by Hilary Hacker.)

WIP Schedule

Submission Deadline:
October 21
PO Box 295
Olympia WA 98507
olywip@gmail.com
Proofreading:
October 28
(Be there for the first read!)

ADVERTISING RATES
olywip@gmail.com

7.25″	x 4.75″	. . .	$125
4.75	x 4.75″	. . .	$83
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The People's Movement Assembly

Saturday, October 29 - Olympia Center

Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace

The Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace is holding its second People's Movement Assembly on October 29 from 8:15 until 4:30 at the Olympia Center. This year's event will create a space for local social justice groups and interested individuals to network, share insights, and plan together for future actions. Following an introductory panel, there will be three blocks of 90 min. facilitated workshops, as listed below. Each workshop will begin with a 10 min. presentation by a local group or individual who has been active in the topic to be discussed. Following this, workshop participants will be able to introduce themselves and then spend the remainder of the time discussing their experiences, thoughts, ideas, interests, and goals. A strong effort will be made to create room for as broad of a range of input as possible. Notes will be taken to be shared with folks who could not attend. In general, we hope that the PMA will allow incoming students, new community members, and established proponents of social justice in it's myriad forms to meet and strengthen the movement in Olympia. Food Not Bombs will be preparing lunch, the Olympia Really Really Free Market will be in full swing, all of the leftist organizations/collectives/autonomous individuals we can get will be tabling, and children will have their own space created by the Olympia Childcare Collective. We hope to see ya'll there!

People's Movement Assembly schedule (subject to change)

8:15-9:00 a.m.: **Coffee, tea, and pastries**
9-10 a.m.: **Opening Panel: "Connecting Local, National, and International Struggles"**
10:10-11:40 a.m.: **First Set of Workshops**
1. Police Accountability and Local Cases
2. The U.S. Wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Elsewhere
3. The Continuing Global Economic Crisis
4. Marxist Praxis Now
5. Environmental Justice and Climate Change
6. Creating an Inter-Generational movement
7. Cooking with Food Not Bombs

11:45-12:45 p.m.: **Lunch, Networking, and Organizing**
1:00-2:25 p.m.: **Second Set of Workshops**
1. Political Prisoners and Immigration
2. State Budget Update and Planning for the Upcoming Legislative Session
3. Local Media
4. War Resistance Inside and Outside of the Military
5. Latin America: Venezuela, Cuba, and the Global South
6. Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions: Palestinian Solidarity in Olympia

2:35-3:50 p.m.: **Third Set of Workshops**
1. Radical State Budget Reform
2. Local Media
3. Corporate Personhood
4. Creating a Washington State Bank
5. Bring The Billions Home Campaign
6. Economic Alternatives: The Time Bank, the Really Really Free Market, and Beyond

3:55-4:30 p.m.: **Final Wrap-Up Meeting**
4:30-5:00 p.m.: **Clean Up (Yes, that means all of us!)**

Please join OMJP and help plan/advertise/support this event. Our next meeting will be held on October 12 at 7 p.m. In the POWER office (309 5TH AVE., behind Rainy Day Records). Visit omjp.net for updates or email thurgood_chappelle@yahoo.com for updates, ideas, clarifications, etc...

Letter to WIP:

Reader disapproves of *WIP*'s coverage of "ACT! for America"

I found the article written on the meeting very amusing. Shahram Hadian was our guest speaker in September and he is certainly not over 50 or white. He is a former Muslim who gave us first hand information of what Shari'ah law is and what the Qua'ran teaches. As for the make up of the group, Lewis County has a caucasian/hispanic mix for the most part. As to why Hispanics aren't in any number, it could possibly be due to a support of failed immigration policies and illegal entry into the country. There is a wealth of information available on what CAIR, the Muslim Brotherhood and other groups agendas are for American and ultimately the world. It's not the "can't we all just get along" message they're trying to get us to accept - with the assistance of writers like you and the WIP publication, all from Muslim clerics, Imams and others who have unequivocally said Israel must be destroyed and America must fall for it's support of Israel and it's Christian heritage. Under Shari'ah law you are either a full Muslim believer, a conversion who pays protection yearly, or a dead person. Women have no rights, homosexuals are murdered. Do your readers know that? Thank you for attending and hopefully you will do the research as a true journalist and see what the truth is.

-Dave Clark

(For more on ACT! for America, see page 3)

NICE ONE GIZA

(SchNEWS)

Egyptian protesters have proven themselves to be a feisty bunch of late - not satisfied with kicking out their dictator, they sent the Israeli ambassador scurrying back across the Sinai Desert.

Hundreds of pro-Palestinian activists separated from the much larger demo against military rule in Tahrir Square and converged on Israel's embassy building in Giza, on the bank of the Nile. The protesters clearly meant business - arriving with sledgehammers and setting to work demolishing the reinforced concrete walls. Egyptian security were completely overwhelmed, and seemed either unable or unwilling to stop the determined mob. Once inside the compound protesters scaled the walls, chucking out thousands of Hebrew language documents from the upper floors.

The prize for most impressive act goes to a chap by the name of Ahmed Elshahat, aka 'Flagman' who scaled the 22 stories of the building to tear down the Israeli flag. His award - a cartoon him in action by Brazilian cartoonist Carlos Latuff, (and no doubt a personal audience with the Egyptian military's finest interrogators). An Egyptian flag was put in place of the Israeli one.

Egypt doesn't seem to be in any hurry to invite the official representative of colonial Zionism back. Egyptian activists can pat themselves on the back again for sorting out things out by themselves on the streets rather than waiting for their useless leaders to do anything.

Israel is rapidly losing friends in the region, even Jordan doesn't seem safe anymore, where the Israelis withdrew their ambassador on Thursday ahead of a massive demo. For decades Israeli leaders could rely on dictatorships to strike deals with them, whilst arrogantly cawing that they were the 'only democracy in the middle east.' The Middle East is looking a lot more democratic these days, and democratic opinion is very, very pro-Palestinian.

After losing their ambassador to Turkey last week and the Egyptian one this week, Netenyahu and his cabinet of racist lunatics must be in a state of panic as Turkish foreign minister Davolgulu meets up with the Egyptian government to discuss the new Middle Eastern order. The rumours flying around are that Hamas may relocate to Egypt (maybe they can use the now empty Israeli embassy building), and that the next flotilla to Gaza will be protected by Turkish warships. And if the Zionists were hoping that they might find a friend in the new NATO-loving Libyan government, they should think again - Hamas leader Ismael Haniyah personally congratulated the leaders of Libya's rebel government, who in turn stated publicly that 'Palestine is the most important issue for the Libyan people'.

SchNEWS.org - Copyleft

The great Tacoma teachers strike

WIP News Service

On Monday, September 12, the Tacoma teachers union voted overwhelmingly to go on strike. Some sticking points in the negotiations included teacher pay (teachers are fighting to maintain their pay, while administrators are pushing for pay-cuts), and class size.

The biggest roadblock in the negotiations, however, was the administration's insistence on instituting subjective, unmeasurable criteria in teacher reassignments and transfers. Had this passed, it would have enabled school administrators to pick and choose which teachers they wanted to reassign without justification. Enacting such a policy would likely have paved the way for eventual subjective criteria in teacher dismissals. The push by school administrations across the country toward subjective reassignment was inspired by anti-union attacks in the Midwest.

For over a week, Tacoma teachers went on strike, gaining the support of thousands locally and across the country. When the district finally began bargaining again, negotiations continued late into the night. In the early morning hours of Thursday, September 22, a tenative agreement was reached. Class size would remain the same, and teacher pay would remain the same. The administration abandoned their demands for subjective criteria. Instead, a committee would be formed to study potential future changes in objective displacement criteria. This committee would have equal representation from the teachers union and school administration, and policies could only be enacted through a 2/3 vote of that committee.

The union approved the new contract by a 99% vote, and teachers returned to work on Friday, September 23.

Brigitte Gabriel

A case study in sincere hypocrisy

Loonwatch.com

Brigitte Gabriel is a notorious apologist for the fascist Phalange group, Kataeb, and the terrorist group, the South Lebanon Army (SLA), who were responsible for the Sabra and Shatila massacres that slaughtered 1,700 to 2,000 Palestinians (mostly women and chidren).

Her story is that she grew up during that nation's long, and bloody civil war. It was a war that claimed many lives and saw many factions shift alliances and allegiance. Groups that were enemies in the morning became allies at night. Indeed, Muslims fought Muslims and Christians fought Christians.

She seems to play up this milieu to justify her views, as if we should – moved by her "alibi" – automatically excuse and accept them. But her alibi is objectionable since most Lebanese who grew up during this same war did not turn out as rabidly racist as she did.

Gabriel believes Arabs "have no soul!"

> *The difference, my friends, between Israel and the Arab world is the difference between civilization and barbarism. It's the difference between good and evil [applause].... This is what we're witnessing in the Arabic world. They have no SOUL! They are dead set on killing and destruction. And in the name of something they call "Allah" which is very different from the God we believe....[applause] because our God is the God of love.*

(No soul? An oddly dehumanizing thing for an alleged Christian to say, don't you think?)

It is no wonder then that the *New York Times Magazine* describes her as a "Radical Islamophobe."

Gabriel started ACT! for America, which receives plenty of funding and "donations" from the likes of the goonish Christians United for Israel and others.

Brigitte's self-contradiction is notable. At times she seems to acknowledge that "moderate" Muslims exist,

> *It's the duty of all moderate Muslims to speak against the hate, against the Jihad... the people in the West must support the moderates.*

The same Brigitte Gabriel on another day scoffs at the notion that a Muslim can be moderate,

> *America and the West are doomed to failure in this war unless they stand up and identify the real enemy: Islam. You hear about Wahabbi and Salafi Islam as the only extreme form of Islam. All the other Muslims, supposedly, are wonderful moderates. Closer to the truth are the pictures of the irrational eruption of violence in reaction to the cartoons of Mohammed printed by a Danish newspaper...derived from one source: authentic Islam.*

And she spills out to the Australian News her bizarre definition of a radical Muslim:

> *A practicing Muslim who goes to mosque every Friday, prays five times a day, and who believes that the Koran is the word of God, and who believes that Mohammed is the perfect man and (four inaudible words) is a radical Muslim.*

Let me get this straight, so a Muslim who essentially observes the basic five pillars of Islam is a radical? That leaves us with 1.4 billion radical Muslims. So who gets to be the "moderate" Muslim? I'm confused.

So Brigitte, what is it? Are there any moderates or not? Brigitte seems to be telling us that the only acceptable Muslims are the ones who don't practice Islam altogether? Or perhaps, she's even implying that the only good Muslim is an ex-Muslim?

The question becomes, how can someone so blatantly clueless get airtime anywhere other than on America's Funniest Home Videos?

The answer is, Brigitte has found her very own litte niche to settle within the lucrative business of Muslim-bashing. Her forte is to parlay her "otherness," and so-called "insider knowledge of the Muslim world," (the "I've been there, I know" line) into a cash cow. Meanwhile we are supposed to be duped into freaking out and running back to her for more "expert" advice brought to us from our loyal friend who ventures into the other side on our behalf.

Gabriel started two organizations, American Congress for Truth (ACT) and (she seems to be running out of ideas) ACT! for America, which receive plenty of funding and "donations" from the likes of the goonish Christians United for Israel and others. Maybe she thinks Americans are gullible, or maybe she is a true hypocrite. As Andre Gide said,

> *The true hypocrite is the one who ceases to perceive his deception, the one who lies with sincerity.*

This very well may be the case with our merchant of intolerance and misunderstanding, Brigitte Gabriel.

▸ **BUSKERS,** continued from page 1

impromptu marching band quickly surrounded City Hall and then entertained the public with an illegal concert.

There was a great and heated controversy over what our crime should be called. Assault with a friendly weapon? Spreading joy without a license?

Whatever it was, it was one of my favourite crimes that I have ever committed.

We easily overwhelmed and occupied the Olympia City Hall. The enemy's capitol was ours.

Now: Picture all of this from the point of view of these new kids: *Wow!* This shit is ***fun!*** This shit is awesome beyond the *nth degree!*

But we weren't done yet. Not by a long shot. We wanted the accused to be confronted by their accusers. We planned to step directly into the maw of the Machine and speak truth into its face. Over a dozen of us signed up to speak during the public comment portion of the council meeting. The people who are usually ignored and/or arrested by the Machine i.e. those who actually live and spend most of their time downtown, were finally heard from; heard from, in fact, most eloquently and most movingly. Several of the kids spoke to the magic of the deeper-than-commercial communication that happens between humans; that magical bond that is the truly important aspect of our humanity. They spoke of the power of busking as a tool in facilitating that magic and as a path than can deepen and enchant that magic.

One gentleman remained utterly silent for almost his entire three minute timeslot, but he also did this most eloquently and most movingly.

Two very young girls, Annastezhaa and Britney (Annastezhaa with dreads who plays the violin on 4th Ave all the time; Britney [pictured right] a teeny-tiny young lady with purple hair and an elfin-like magical aire about her and who is cuter than an open can of peaches and who very ably organized the concert mess when the designated organizer went to Seattle to pick up one of the acts...)

Anyway, where was I? Oh yeah: Annastezhaa and Britney were both especially effective speakers. Soul, brains, spirit and strength. If I weren't a big tough guy, I'd say they almost brought me to tears. (Visit www.olywip.org for a link to the video of the testimony.)

After this our people were now *truly* pumped! *This kicks ass!* This is ***fun!*** This was *awesome* beyond the *nth degree! Luvin' every minute of it!!!*

However, we *still* weren't done! On this historic evening our merry little band of novice fire-breathers had a very rare and a very special treat in store for them: In their very first engagement, *they got to participate in a victory against the Machine!*

After our performances it was the council-members' turn to speak. I didn't envy them. They had to follow Annastezhaa's and Britney's acts? Right. Good luck with that, kids. In addition, they were in a completely indefensible position. In further addition it almost seemed as if the council members themselves had been just as surprised by the anti-busking law as we had been. It was like the anti-busking ordinance was just some secret weapon that the police kept hidden from public view in a secret closet with security measures to be broken out only on dark misty nights in order to be used very selectively as a tool to harass poor street-kids who weren't likely to have lawyers.

Yes, it may have been a difficult time to speak — but, they, of course, still tried.

They can't help themselves.

True to form, Rhenda Strub spoke first. True to form, Rhenda Strub got right to the heart of the matter. I am pretty sure I sensed some exasperation, though, when she noted that she could see little apparent reason for such a law. She pointed out that no one on the current council was on the council when this law had been passed and she inquired of our City Manager — that Silver-Tongued-Devil Steve Hall — why Olympia even had such a law in the first place.

There was a great and heated controversy over what our crime should be called. Assault with a friendly weapon? Spreading joy without a license? Whatever it was, it was one of my favourite crimes that I have ever committed.

The implication in asking such a question in the manner in which she asked it was also a fairly transparent attempted-transfer-of-guilt from the council to Mr. Hall; evidently Mr. Hall *had* been in some sort of policy-position at that time. Therefore, the embarrassing "busking" law was more *his* fault than it was that of the current council's!

Yes, it may have been a difficult time to shift blame for a law that the City Council, and not Mr. Hall, can keep or repeal — but they, of course, still tried.

They can't help themselves.

True to form, that Silver-Tongued-Devil Mr. Hall employed his silver tongue deploying the usual politician-speak to justify the unjustifiable, i.e. he selectively selected favorable facts and selectively ignored uncomfortable ones.

True to form, Jeannine Roe then exhibited that she didn't have a clue by stating that she loved buskers and that in addition she saw no need for the law because she never saw buskers downtown anymore anyway. Several of us blinked. We had thought that that had been the whole central point of the whole damned thing from the whole beginning.

Whatever. We are the unwashed masses. What do we know?

By the end of this charade the council agreed to send the busking laws to committee for "review" with an eye toward modifying or rescinding them. While I generally ignore what politicians say and carefully watch what they do, saying it is necessarily the first step to doing it. They can say it without doing it but they can't do it without saying it.

Thus — at least this first step in the process — we can quote that most quotable of our former Commander-in-Chiefs, the unforgettable, the Less Than Hounourable George W. Bush:

Mission Accomplished.

For now, anyway. On this front. On this day.

When we were done, many of these new kids asked me what we were doing next...

Photo by Evan Holm

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Tulip Credit Union

A different kind of financial institution

WIP News Service

The Thurston Union of Low-Income People, better known as Tulip Credit Union, is not your average "financial institution." Tulip was founded in 2004 by community activists and low-income people's advocates (with the help of other credit unions and the Olympia Food Co-op), under the belief that access to lending capital and financial support should be available to anyone, regardless of their economic status or their profitability. Today, Tulip continues to serve its mission by offering microcredit loans and financial counseling, and by giving the people of Thurston County a way to invest their money back into their own community, rather than helping pad the profits of the banking industry.

Recently, WIP*'s Wally Cuddeford sat down with Johna La Rue, Tulip's manager, and Eric Bowman, Tulip's board chair, to discuss what Tulip is, why Tulip exists, and why you should consider taking your financial business to Tulip.*

Serving the low-income community

Eric: Most credit unions serve a specific segment of the community. There are credit unions for the Native American community, there are Latino credit unions. There's the Washington State Employees Credit Union. Until recently, to be a member with BECU you had to be a Boeing employee.

Like these other credit unions, Tulip also serves a specific demographic: the low-income community of Thurston County. So what does this mean? For one, it means offering lending services better tailored toward low-income people.

Johna: Most places don't [lend] less than $1000. I had one guy come in, he got a job as an apprentice welder. But before he could work, he had to buy special boots. He didn't have $150 for boots he needed *to work*. He didn't have credit, he didn't have a Visa card, and the store didn't offer him credit. We got him a microcredit loan, gave him the $150 he needed for the boots, and he paid it back over three months.

Eric: We had a caterer who needed $600-$800 just for working capital. There's a lot of self-employed people, landscapers, jobs like that, who just need money for tools or whatever. Roughly 10% of our members come as referrals from other institutions. They tell people who come in, "We can't help you, but maybe Tulip can."

So how is Tulip able to survive, offering the low-income services other institutions don't offer?

Eric: A lot of the people we deal with, it's not that they're as 'risky' as other lenders want you to think they are. They just need smaller amounts of money for smaller amounts of time. They need more handholding through the loan process, more staff time. The burdens on our system aren't that these members are risky, it's that they're higher-maintenance.

But Tulip is not just for the low-income. Even if you are above Tulip's "low-income" threshold of $43,000 for a family or $33,000 for a household you can still join Tulip if you are a member of the Olympia Food Co-op. In fact, 23% of Tulip's membership isn't low-income.

Johna: While our focus is on low-income financial services, to provide these services we require participation from a cross-section of the community. A smaller portion of our membership is affluent, and could go anywhere, but choose to go to Tulip. We're very dependent on these individuals. For instance, one person is a doctor who does everything he can to bring us his debt. One $25,000 new car loan enables us to help 100 not-as-cost-effective members. Debit cards alone cost us $6 per person per month. And the only way we generate money is by lending it.

Eric: We depend on a diverse cross-section of the community wanting to come to us. Even myself, I have a mortgage at one credit union and multiple loans with Tulip. We have a lot of members like that, who have multiple relationships – state employees, Food Co-op shoppers.

Establishing credit

Another focus of Tulip is helping low-income people establish (and re-establish) the positive credit ratings they need to gain access to vital services.

Eric: There's a lot of people who've never been on the "grid" with credit – hippies, kids, immigrants – and other people who were on the grid and screwed it up. Those two are really our reason for existence. We help people improve their credit score. Our goal is to get people into the system who have no other way.

Johna: Unfortunately, in today's world, it is absolutely necessary for you to use your credit. You need a credit score. It's not like before. You can't just walk into a bank and say "I have a great payment history with these stores." One guy we had, he'd gotten by on store credit his whole life. It was amazing to me that there were places that still did that. But if you don't have any proof of payments, you may not understand why you can't go into a bank and get a loan.

Eric: Everyone needs short-term liquidity. Low-income people aren't very liquid, and that can have serious impacts. People have $1000 'events' in their life all the time. A serious medical event can easily be $1000. You might have to take your car into the mechanic, and that could easily be $1000. And problems have come from people you wouldn't even expect. One guy who came in had everything all lined up great, and then suddenly he had a divorce and his situation turned upside down.

Johna: A considerable number of people aren't prepared for that. Like the guy who didn't even have $150 for his work boots. But by coming to us, he established a relationship with a financial institution, we got him used to structured credit, which helps if he comes back some day for a real loan. He builds a better credit score, which lowers the cost for rent, insurance. They even do credit score checks now when you apply for work.

Financial counseling

In addition to microcredit and other financial services tailored to the needs of the low-income community, Tulip also offers one-on-one financial counseling to those who need it, and works with other agencies who can provide more in-depth credit counseling for those experiencing serious issues.

"Before he could work, he had to buy special boots. He didn't have $150 for boots he needed *to work*. We got him a microcredit loan, gave him the $150 he needed for the boots, and he paid it back over three months."

Johna: A lot of people don't want to analyze their personal finances. They don't want to know just how upside-down they might be. So we try to inform people of the financial services they're able to get. With every loan application, we sit down and do a budget worksheet. Most people who come in never really had a 'budget.' They just know 'On the 1st I pay this, and on the 15th I pay this.' People don't know that when you add these things up, and then add something else on top of that, it can cause serious problems.

As Johna and Eric both noted, some of the old tricks that low-income people used to get by with are being eliminated. For instance, the Check 21 Act of 2003 enabled immediate electronic deposit of checks, effectively eliminating the "float time" some people used to depend on when writing checks.

Johna: A large portion of people who come in don't understand there's a way to prevent themselves having overdraft charges. They don't know that, with the Check 21 Act, as soon as you write that check, you're saying there's money in that account, meaning no more floating checks.

Eric: The lending abuse we've seen – at loan committee I saw someone come to us with an auto loan at 44% APR [Annual Percentage Rate]. People come in with credit card debt, and we find ways to restructure it. One person had gotten payday loans, he had committed *one paycheck* out to *seven* different places. We helped him get that under control.

Johna: People will usually make good with us. The last thing they want to do is get to the last resort, and then lose that too.

And it's not just the low-income community that can benefit from the financial counseling that Tulip provides.

Johna: We also offer financial coaching for immigrant members. A lot of our immigrant members use check-cashing services and payday loans, because they don't get questioned. They can get in and get out. It may only be $13 each time, but that adds up. What we do is important for the few immigrant members we do have. We help them have as much money as they can.

Predatory lending

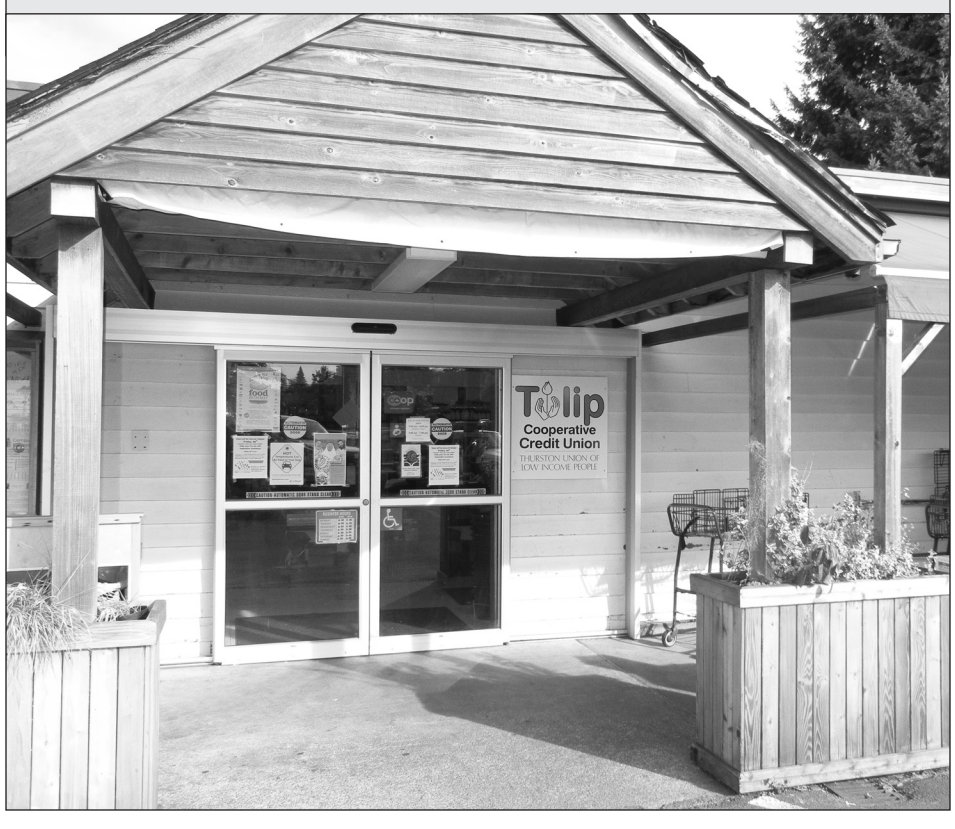
On the other end of the spectrum, there are many "financial services" out there targeted toward low-income people which are not actually in their best interests. And Johna and Eric have seen it all.

Johna: Check-cashing is a big one. You can get your check cashed at a lot of places, but everyone charges to cash checks. Even when a financial institution has somebody come to cash a check from that same institution, even people who have an account there, if they just want to cash a check rather than deposit it, they can get charged. I've even seen people pay fees for depositing checks. It does happen.

Eric: The euphemism that gets used is "stealth pricing," because you don't see it coming. A good example is the largest-to-smallest policy on overdraft protection. Let's say you have $100 in your account, and you write checks for $1, $150, and 25 cents, all in one day. Well, the bank applies them in a largest-to-smallest order. The $150 gets applied first, you get an overdraft fee, and then they apply the

▸ **TULIP,** continued on page 14

Tulip Credit Union is located inside the Eastside Food Co-op on Pacific Avenue. For more information on financial services offered by Tulip, call (360) 570-2292, or go to www.tulipcu.coop



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Here's why Longshore workers in Longview are so angry

ILWU President Robert McEllrath is detained by officers from Cowlitz County Sheriff's Department, on September 7. (*Photo by ILWU Local 40 President Dawn Des Brisay.*)

David Groves,
The Stand

Longview (Sept. 8th) — Violence erupted today in a major labor dispute that has simmered for months at the Port of Longview, leading to work shutdowns at ports up and down the Washington coast. Why are members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) — and their supporters in Washington and Oregon — so upset about a grain terminal that employs just 50 workers?

Here's why.

EGT Development is a joint venture of Japan-based Itochu Corp, South Korea's STX Pan Ocean and St. Louis-based Bunge North America. Like so many corporations that promise good jobs to get what they want, EGT got a special state tax exemption and a sweetheart lease deal from the Port of Longview to build a $200 million grain terminal there. The government even seized adjacent land for the project. But as soon as the deal's ink was dry and the ceremonial first shovel of dirt was overturned two years ago, EGT began running the project on the cheap.

Despite high unemployment in Cowlitz County and the availability of hundreds of skilled union building trades workers, EGT imported the vast majority of its construction crews from low-wage communities out-of-state and did not pay area standard wages, leading to howls from the local labor community.

After the terminal was built, EGT decided to ignore the Port of Longview's contract with ILWU Local 21 to hire union labor on its leased site. Instead, the multinational conglomerate hired non-union workers — claiming it would save the company $1 million a year (a figure the company later admitted had been plucked from the sky) — and EGT sued the Port, arguing it was not bound by the contract with the ILWU.

For months, ILWU picketed EGT and attempted to pressure the company to negotiate with the union. Those protests gradually grew in size as EGT refused to meet with the union, culminating in a major rally on June 3, when more than 1,000 ILWU supporters from Washington to California rallied outside EGT's headquarters in downtown Portland. The protest was loud, but nonviolent.

The dispute escalated at a July 11 protest outside the EGT terminal in Longview, when members tore down a chain-link gate and stormed the EGT grain terminal. About 100 union dock workers, including union leaders, were cited and arrested.

"We are going to fight for our jobs in our jurisdiction. We have worked this dock for 70 years, and to have a big, rich corporation come in and say, 'We don't want you,' is a problem," ILWU 21 President Dan Coffman told the (Longview) Daily News. "We're all together. We're all going to jail as a union."

On July 14, hundreds of union dock workers crowded onto railroad tracks to block a train from delivering grain to the EGT terminal. The Daily News reported that the 107-car train was rerouted to Vancouver following the standoff, which prompted Burlington Northern Santa Fe to indefinitely suspend train traffic to the grain terminal for safety reasons.

"By far this is the most intense labor event that I can remember," Cowlitz County Sheriff Mark Nelson told the Daily News. But he said he understands what the union is trying to accomplish even though he didn't agree with its tactics. "Bless their hearts. These are our neighbors, too. These are our folks. This is our community."

EGT was feeling the heat, and community support for the local ILWU workers was growing as more people learned the facts of the dispute.

Then the company made a surprise announcement that it would hire a unionized subcontractor to run the terminal. EGT signed an agreement with Federal Way-based General Construction Co., a subsidiary of Kiewit, to operate the terminal with union members from the Portland-based International Union of Operating Engineers Local 701.

The Washington State Labor Council condemned EGT's attempt to pit union members against each other.

"EGT, a Japanese multinational corporation that has received tax breaks from our state to build this grain elevator, has thumbed its nose at the members of ILWU Local 21 and is trying to pit workers against workers, local unions against local unions. This is unacceptable," said WSLC President Jeff Johnson. "The work at the Port of Longview is longshore work and we need to come together as community and labor and say 'no' to EGT — 'you will not disrespect labor in Longview or anywhere else in our state'."

There have been numerous incidents provoked by EGT's union-vs.-union arrangement. Most recently, a contractor drove right through the ILWU picket line on Aug. 29 and struck two ILWU members who, fortunately, were not seriously injured. Although the contractor was not cited or arrested for the vehicular assault, an angry ILWU picketer was arrested for allegedly damaging the next vehicle that attempted to cross the picket line, a charge based on video surveillance provided by an EGT security guard.

The next day, the National Labor Relations Board announced it was seeking a court order to end "aggressive picketing" at the EGT facility and allow Burlington Northern Santa Fe trains to deliver grain to the facility. Such an order was issued last week, according to Rich Ahearn, director of the NLRB's Seattle office.

Which brings us to September 7.

Some 400 ILWU members stood on the railroad tracks to block a train from delivering grain to the terminal for about four hours, but the train passed through after protesters were confronted by 50 police officers in riot gear. ILWU President Robert McEllrath, who attended the protest, was detained by police, escalating tensions between protesters and officers. In the confrontation that ensued, police beat protesters away with clubs and pepper spray.

Ultimately, McEllrath returned to urge members to end the standoff.

"You can get maced and tear-gassed and clubbed (today)" or wait for longshore support from all over the West Coast when the next train tries to enter the EGT terminal, McEllrath reportedly told protesters after he met with police.

"If we leave here, it doesn't mean that we gave up and quit. It means we're coming back."

All but 16 of the protesters returned to the union hall; the 16 who refused were arrested for trespassing.

Early on the morning of Sept. 8, hundreds of ILWU members and their supporters reportedly stormed the EGT terminal at the Port of Longview, broke down the gates, overpowered security guards, damaged railroad cars, and dumped grain, according to Longview Police Chief Jim Duscha. Initial reports indicated no one was hurt and nobody has been arrested. After a few hours, the protesters returned to their union hall.

To sum up: a taxpayer-subsidized international conglomerate, which is operating on public property, is suing the public so it can avoid paying the area's standard wages and undercut its competitors that do. Then, it exacerbated tensions with the local labor community by importing union workers from another jurisdiction to cross the picket lines.

That's why ILWU members are angry, and that's why this is about more than just 50 jobs in Longview.

Longview news shorts

Multinational EGT loses bid to severely restrict workers' free speech rights

(Sept 8, 2011) A United States District Court Judge today denied the NLRB's motion to ban picketing at the EGT facility in the Port of Longview. The judge issued only a very narrow preliminary injunction preserving the right to peaceful picket — far short of what the NLRB sought.

"Union members are pleased with the outcome even though they are smarting from false allegations of hostage-taking that were spread in the media throughout the day, an outright lie intended to discredit the union and its struggle for good jobs for the community," said Leal Sundet, Coast Committeeman for the ILWU Coast Longshore Division.

"EGT has employed a professional strike breaker and a labor provocateur to manufacture trouble during peaceful protests, but they can't change the fact that longshore workers are simply wanting to go to work and do their jobs," Sundet said.

Source: Longshore & Shipping News

International Longshoremen's Association in solidarity

(ILA) The International Longshoremen's Association, AFL-CIO joins in solidarity with our Sisters and Brothers of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union in condemning the attack by police in riot gear on hundreds of ILWU member-protesters in Washington State and the detention of ILWU President Bob McEllrath.

ILWU President McEllrath and hundreds of his members were peacefully protesting at a railroad tracks yesterday, blocking a train carrying grain to a foreign-owned loading facility in Longview, Washington.

"The ILA condemns this aggression against union workers seeking to protect the work that they have performed for over 80 years in the Port of Longview," said ILA President Harold J. Daggett. "They were peacefully protesting the failure by big grain companies to honor ILWU agreements," President Daggett continued. "I stand with ILWU President in proclaiming: 'It shouldn't be a crime to fight for good jobs in America'."

ILA President Harold Daggett pledged the ILA's full support in this struggle.

"The ILA stands with ILWU and will offer any help it can to make certain ILWU members rights and jobs are protected," added ILA President Daggett.

Source: International Longshoremen's Association web site

Danish dockworkers union pledges solidarity with ILWU

We are writing in order to express solidarity and to support the International Longshore Workers' Union (ILWU) in their just struggle for decent jobs at the Port of Longview.

3F in Denmark, representing Danish Dock Workers, is standing in solidarity with the workers of the ILWU in the United States, who were detained by police for protesting against job losses.

The rightful protest from the ILWU to secure decent jobs was disgracefully met with police brutality and our brother, ILWU President Bob McEllrath, was arrested.

We are appalled over the actions of the police, and express our strongest support to the ILWU in their struggle to secure proper unionized work at the Ports.

200 Longshore Workers turn themselves in

(September 16) 200 longshore workers peacefully turned themselves in at the Cowlitz County Hall of Justice "to stop costly, abusive arrests" connected to the blocking of railroad tracks a week earlier. The county sheriff chose to ignore them and instead arrested local union vice president Jacob Whiteside. The arrest was in a church parking lot in front of White's children.

KOIN.com

ILWU files civil rights lawsuit to stop police brutality in Longview

(September 22) The International Longshore and Warehouse Union and ILWU Local 21 filed a civil rights lawsuit against the Sheriff of Cowlitz County, the Police Chief of Longview, and the City of Longview in response to ongoing police brutality and harassment related to its labor dispute with EGT Development at the Port of Longview

"The ILWU is filing this lawsuit to stop the abuse of longshore workers and their supporters who are being violently pursued and intentionally prosecuted for exercising their free speech and associational rights," said ILWU International President Bob McEllrath. "Longshore workers and their supporters are no longer free to move about their hometown without fear of being ambushed in front of children and families by an overzealous, out-of-control Police Chief and Sheriff. This blatant abuse of authority has to stop."

The lawsuit lists actions by law enforcement against union members and their supporters that include:

* arresting and jailing members for nonviolent misdemeanors;
* aggressively arresting members for nonviolent misdemeanors;
* engaging in almost constant open and obvious surveillance of the ILWU Local 21 union hall;
* following and roughing up individuals wearing clothes bearing the ILWU or driving vehicles marked with the ILWU;
* "shining bright lights into union members' homes for hours at a time late at night; and"
* "following and conducting surveillance of union members and officials in their homes."

"Local union officers have tried for weeks to engage law enforcement and the Port of Longview to coordinate peaceful picketing and targeted acts of lawful and constitutionally protected public demonstrations and civil disobedience in an isolated rural area on public port property. These efforts have been rebuffed with law enforcement choosing instead to impose its own brutal campaign of retaliation and excessive force on the union and its supporters." Leal Sundet, ILWU Coast Committeeman

Evergreen Divestment: The year in review

TESC Divest

In 2005, over 120 Palestinian unions, student groups and other civil society organizations called upon "international civil society. . . and people of conscience all over the world to impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era." In response, students at Evergreen formed TESC Divest and began to organize around building awareness of the Palestinian-initiated BDS call. (http://www.bdsmovement.net/call)

In the Spring of 2010, the student body of The Evergreen State College cast a historic vote in support of Palestinian human rights. It was the first student-wide vote of its kind in the nation. Two resolutions were passed, one calling for divestment from companies profiting off of Israel's occupation of Palestine, and the other for the creation of a "CAT Free Zone," prohibiting the use of Caterpillar Inc. equipment on campus. The result of the vote was a resounding victory for both resolutions, passing with 79.5% and 71.8% respectively. The voter turnout set a record at Evergreen, and was more than double the average turnout in student elections nationwide.

Following the student vote, TESC Divest received hundreds of statements of support, and the story made international news. One of the most powerful pieces of correspondence was a letter from Palestinian Students' Campaign for the Academic Boycott of Israel (PSCABI) in which they described the difficulties and dangers they face in trying to obtain a quality education. (http://tescdivest.org/letter.php) 16 student groups on campus signed on in support of the resolutions, as did over 30 faculty and staff members. An online petition was created and quickly gained hundreds of statements of support from all 50 states and dozens of countries around the world. The Geoduck Student Union unanimously passed a resolution supporting the student vote and directing the Evergreen Board of Trustees to respond in a timely manner to the request of the student body.

Instead, the Board and the administration have decided to work in private, without student input, to squelch student support for Palestinian human rights and equality. They can do this because the initiatives are non-binding, meaning that the administration has the final say. Furthermore, the administration has met at least twice with the Israeli General Consul for the West Coast as well as powerful pro-Israel lobbying groups and interests, in essence putting the desires of Israel above the administration's responsibilities to the student body and international law. Both the Board of Trustees and Evergreen President Les Purce have stated in writing that they will not honor the student vote. The college has recently passed a new Socially Responsible Investment Policy, but its effects are unclear as-of-yet.

It's important to remember that we are answering a call for help, not rushing to the aid of people who did not ask for it. TESC Divest has committed to maintaining a strong presence on campus by holding educational events, creating eye-catching displays, and reminding the administration that they cannot wait out this issue. As U.S. citizens, we have an extra responsibility to take action, as the U.S. gives Israel over $3 billion in military aid annually and routinely blocks international efforts in the U.N and elsewhere to hold the Israeli government accountable for its actions. In Olympia, the Co-Op is being sued following its historic decision to boycott Israeli goods. Evergreen is being faced with a legal challenge as well, putting even more pressure on the admin to maintain business as usual. [See Page 1 for more background on both the Co-op and Evergreen.]

Instead, the Board and the administration have decided to work in private, without student input. Both the Board of Trustees and Evergreen President Les Purce have stated in writing that they will not honor the student vote.

Now, more than ever, the entire Evergreen Community must unite and make it clear to the administration: "We *will* divest!"

How can YOU help?

The great thing about BDS is that everyone can participate. From lobbying to direct action to simply making informed choices as to where you spend your money, making an effort is the most important step one can take. We need students interested in organizing film screenings, attending lectures by guest speakers, making zines, taking photos, writing articles, and pressuring the administration to respect campus democracy. Working together, we will continue to build momentum and demand that those in power listen to the student body. New members are always needed, and maintaining a strong and sustainable student voice on campus is essential. Please join TESC Divest in helping to bring hope to those who need it and justice to those who deserve it.

For more information, visit us at tescdivest.org

TESC DIVEST CAMPAIGNS:

Urging the Board of Trustees

Since the vote, TESC Divest has been a strong presence at almost every single Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting, urging members to respect the student vote and implement socially responsible policy changes. In Spring 2011, students, faculty and community members packed into the final Board of Trustees meeting to express their feelings on the silencing of the democratic student voice. The turnout was overwhelming despite the fact that the BOT had moved the Public Comment period to coincide with the Spring Academic Fair in an apparent attempt to limit student testimony. Dozens upon dozens of students attended and demanded the implementation of the democratically-determined divestment resolutions. Concurrently, a banner was hung from the clock tower featuring the classic Evergreen logo marred by the imposition of the Separation Wall, which maintains the occupation by snaking its way across Palestinian lands.

Partnership with Olympia JVP

Throughout the course of this year, we have been very fortunate to closely work with the Olympia chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace. Their *We Divest* campaign aims to pressure the investment firm TIAA-CREF to honor its claim of socially responsible investment by ceasing to invest in corporations whose actions contribute to the violation of human rights in Palestine. TESC Divest stands in solidarity with this nationwide campaign.

The Art of Living Under Occupation

"The Art of Living" is an annual fundraiser by The Evergreen State College Foundation that raises money for scholarships and other uses. However, the Foundation cannot guarantee that the money that is donated will not be invested in corporations that profit off the occupation of Palestinian lands, including Caterpillar, whose D9 weaponized bulldozers were used to murder Evergreen student Rachel Corrie in 2003. For our "Art of Living Under Occupation" event, members donned our finest attire and met potential donors as they entered the Library building. An informational handout was shared, requesting donors to pressure the Administration to honor the student voice. We thanked them for their donations to the school and answered their questions about BDS at Evergreen. A few BOT members stopped by and were invited to upcoming panels, discussions, and film showings on Palestine/Israel. The message was spread in a respectful manner and many new allies were gained.

Right to Education Week

Honoring a call from Palestinian students, members of TESC Divest and our allies participated in "Right to Education Week." RTE Evergreen included a demonstration by students who stood outside of the Library building wearing Israeli and American flag blindfolds while holding open books. This action highlighted the severe obstacles to accessing quality education faced by Palestinians in the occupied territories. Checkpoints and curfews restrict the movement of students and their instructors, while shortages of basic school supplies and textbooks drastically limit the quality of education available to most Palestinians. Near-constant Israeli military bombings and incursions further damage Palestine's infrastructure while exacerbating existing mental traumas in children and adults alike. This and other educational events helped Evergreen students better understand our own privileges and the need to use them to create positive change.

The Evergreen Settlement

On the first day of Spring quarter, students, staff, and faculty were welcomed back to campus with a mock "Israeli Settlement" placed on the center of Red Square in honor of Land Day. Land Day is a remembrance of the first time Palestinians inside Israel stood together and successfully resisted the State of Israel's confiscation of their land. Modeled after Har Homa, an illegal settlement in the West Bank, Evergreen students occupied the structure for 63 consecutive hours in memory of 63 years of occupation and discrimination under which Palestinians have struggled. In addition, dozens of "refugee tents" displaying names and dates were put up to represent the hundreds of Palestinian villages, towns, and cities which have been destroyed since 1948. As the demonstration progressed, a mock Separation Barrier was put up that pushed the tents farther and farther back, symbolizing the encroachment upon private Palestinian lands by Israeli colonies. Despite constant rain, hundreds of Evergreen community members visited, asked questions, and shared their thoughts. The entire structure was built and paid for by members of TESC Divest, all of whom are either students or alumni.

The Nakba Memorial Display

In Spring 2011, TESC Divest and Olympia JVP worked to bring to Evergreen the Nakba Memorial. The Nakba—Arabic for "Catastrophe"—is the name by which Palestinians refer to their experience of the establishment of the State of Israel. The Nakba Memorial was made up of white placards with the names of Palestinian villages that were ethnically cleansed during the establishment of the State of Israel, and fact sheets with information about the Nakba were handed out to students, staff, and faculty who were curious about the display that covered nearly all of Red Square.

Angela Davis Endorsement of Divestment at Evergreen

TESC Divest was far from being the only anti-occupation voice on campus. During the 2011 Evergreen Graduation Ceremony, keynote speaker Dr. Angela Davis spoke forcefully in support of the the efforts at Evergreen to divest from the Israeli occupation. She stated:

"I'm happy to hear that students and faculty on this campus, in the context of a 21st century resistance to Israeli apartheid, are following those who stood up against South African apartheid and are raising the demand for divestment. This is a burgeoning movement, and you here at the Evergreen State College have the opportunity to provide progressive leadership to the rest of the country. As the anti-South African apartheid campaign was spurred on by those universities that divested early on. . . eventually virtually every school in the country followed their leadership." (Read the whole speech at www.olywip.org - July 2011 issue)

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Evergreen inches laboriously toward divestment, in deed if not in name

Nigel Weiss

A new policy at Evergreen takes a stab at subjecting money the college has tied up in investments to more scrutiny for social responsibility. The policy establishes a permanent committee to periodically review college investments and report on whether those investments meet certain social responsibility criteria.

The creation of a process for writing the new policy followed increasing pressure on the Evergreen administration over the last year to respect a vote passed by the student body in May 2010 calling on Evergreen to divest from companies that profit from the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Though there is apparently no acknowledgement from the administration that work on a new investment policy has anything to do with the student vote, there is little doubt the work of the student government and campus Palestine solidarity activists played a role in getting socially responsible investment on the administration's agenda.

Carl Davis, a student, was a member of the committee. "I think the investment committee did come about as a result of pressure from having the student vote, then having the GSU pushing to make sure the student vote was recognized," said Davis. "I think that the general view of people on the committee was that we shouldn't be investing in any country that is involved in systemic violation of human rights," he said.

Since the amount the college invests in company stocks is a relatively low number – around $1.5 million as of recently – Evergreen is unable to manage its own investments, needing to rely on professional managers like mutual funds and public equity funds instead. In addition to creating a permanent Investment Committee, the committee's work involved comparing funds viable for consideration by the college against Evergreen's criteria for social responsibility, even though the language to define social responsibility was too weak for the standards of members of the committee, according to Davis. Many socially responsible investment funds (SRIs), for example, only avoid investment in companies that are "actively involved" in human rights abuses, still allowing those that are in other ways complicit in abuses. The Calvert Fund, an SRI the committee looked into, invests in the French light-rail company Veolia, which has come under pressure internationally in recent years because of its work for municipalities in Israel constructing and operating Jewish-only public transit lines in Jerusalem and the West Bank. Apparently, such a relationship doesn't constitute "active involvement" in human rights abuses, and the company remains attractive to SRIs because it builds eco-friendly transport systems. By this logic, neither could you tie active involvement in abuses to Caterpillar, the American-based construction equipment company that weaponizes bulldozers for Israel's military, including the one that was used to kill Evergreen student Rachel Corrie in 2003. Corrie was crushed under a bulldozer operated by a soldier of the Israeli Defense Forces while trying to protect a Palestinian home from being demolished in Gaza.

Given the weakness in some of the criteria for the SRIs available to Evergreen, it's imaginable that Evergreen would select the best that are available, and then monitor their portfolios of investments to ensure that the school's values toward social responsibility are being upheld. But during the committee process, the administration expressly shot down the possibility of maintaining a list of companies with unethical business practices, and no other mechanism is in place in the policy for ensuring that financial assets held by Evergreen's investment managers are in line with the college's values.

"That's the problem: The student vote was about divestment from companies that are complicit, and that means companies like Caterpillar and Veolia," Davis said. "That's very clearly a part of what the student vote was about. But in terms of mutual funds, the strongest language does not, in my mind, preclude investing in those kinds of things."

In a letter emailed to the campus in November 2010, Evergreen President Les Purce, while acknowledging the gravity of the May 2010 vote, nonetheless stated that the college would refuse to honor the students' overwhelming mandate, and would neither divest from companies profiting from the occupation, nor create a policy banning Caterpillar equipment from campus, a position that both the President and Board of Trustees has continued to maintain. The student initiative passed with 79.5% in favor of divesting and 71.8% in favor of declaring Evergreen a "Cat-Free Campus."

Despite its shortcomings, the policy includes some language that may help the inclusion of student and community involvement in discussions at Evergreen about where it should invest.

The new investment policy also misses a big chunk of the total investments made on Evergreen's behalf – funds controlled by The Evergreen Foundation. In a deal with the University of Washington, The Evergreen Foundation's investments are tied up with the UW Consolidated Endowment Fund (UWCEF), an independent fund that, like The Evergreen Foundation, provides money for grants and scholarships with the returns on investments it's made. The UWCEF's portfolio, a scattershot of funds with more than a hundred investment managers, is invested in assets from all across the market with apparently little regard for social responsibility -- including oil and gas companies and top financial institutions. The Evergreen Foundation in this way is able to make better returns on its relatively modest pool of around $7 million – paltry in comparison to the UWCEF, which handles billions in investments for the entire UW system – but abdicates its ability to determine what kinds of investments it makes. According to an overview of investment practices on the Evergreen website, the UWCEF has received commendations for its focus on sustainable energy and community development loan funds, but a look at its list of investment managers calls its overall commitment to socially responsible investment into question. More than this, the UWCEF is unlikely to care about the priorities of the campus community at Evergreen.

In a June 1st email sent to the Evergreen campus, John Hurley, Vice President of Business and Finance, announced the completion of the committee's work in writing the policy. This, however, came as a surprise to members of the committee, including Davis and fellow student Kaitlyn Lucas.

"When it was wrapped up it was kind of a surprise to us. They pretty much ended the meetings, they didn't tell us that was the last meeting," said Lucas. "The things that are written in the policy are things that we had been discussing, but we thought that they were still in the works and in the process of being written, we didn't know that this was a final draft," she said.

The email also explained that the Evergreen administration would use the guidelines from the new policy to shift investments accordingly over the summer, a fact that both Lucas and Davis said they had also not been appraised of.

"There were a lot of times I felt we were ignored or overlooked on points without being directly communicated with," Lucas said.

Following the reinvestment that presumably took place this summer, the administration is to host public forums on the results of their decisions during the Fall Quarter. However, Hurley's email doesn't explain why the process waits until after investments have already been shifted before checking to see what the public thinks.

"I think for myself I've lost a little faith in anything actually coming out of writing the policy, just seeing the blatant ignoring of the student body by the administration," Lucas said.

Spokespersons for the Evergreen administration said they weren't able to respond in time for this article's publication.

Despite its shortcomings, the policy includes some language that may help the inclusion of student and community involvement in discussions at Evergreen about where it should invest. For one thing, the policy promises to revisit the college's definition of social responsibility every three years, which could present an avenue for scrutinizing investments made by the college in the intervening period. However, this periodic review would be the only opportunity for students and faculty to be directly involved in decision making, as only members of the administration sit on the Investment Committee during the rest of the time it regularly convenes. Since Hurley has said that the committee also plans to consider public input on the investment decisions it makes, then the community at large should have another shot at voicing opinions about where Evergreen puts its money, though as we have seen at other times, the administration is under no obligation to listen.

"Ideally I would have it to where students didn't have to spend all of their time making sure we stay divested, but I think the positive thing is that this policy, if the committee is created in the right way for revisiting the meaning of social responsibility, and if students work their asses off, can be stronger than it could've been from this process [during Spring]," Davis said. "So I think there's absolutely space for students to have more of a say and it's absolutely vital for students to continue to work on it. I would like to say it's done, but it's not."

Nigel Weiss is co-coordinator of Mideast Solidarity Project, a campus group engaged in anti-racism and educational work around issues affecting oppressed peoples of the Middle East, Central Asia, and North Africa. He can be reached at jlnweiss@gmail.com. For more information about divestment at Evergreen, visit tescdivest.org.

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Art as resistance

The story of the Maia Mural Brigade

At Beit Hanoun Kindergarten, an ordinary wall is transformed into a living symbol of resistance - Photo by Hilary Hacker

Interview from WIP News Service

This summer, four Olympia activists joined a delegation to Palestine as part of the Maia Mural project. The project involved touring Gaza and the West Bank, producing collaborative murals at the sites of newly installed water purification units. Upon returning to Olympia, three of the participants sat down with WIP *to tell us about their experiences and what they witnessed in Palestine.*

Photo by Hilary Hacker

WIP: *Thank you very much for sitting down with us. First, let's start with introductions.*

Hilary: My name's Hilary Hacker. I work as the outreach and publications coordinator with the Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project. I teach Spanish language preschool at Mason County Literacy and I work with Bridges Not Walls; I really became connected to Palestine through the ORSMP with my work around immigration.

Alicia: My name's Alicia Martinson. I currently work as an art teacher at the Mariah Art School. I also worked as a project coordinator of the Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project for about 4 years. I saw the project through all of it stages, mostly through outreach and production coordination.

"Once we crossed Erez and presented our passport twice to two different sets of Israeli authorities we arrived in Gaza but confined to a long caged passage through the buffer zone to reach the Palestinian border control at the other end. The walk takes around 15-20 minutes." Photo by Melissa Franklin

Andrew: My name's Andrew Meyer. Currently, I'm a student of political science at Evergreen. I serve on the Board of Directors of the Rachel Corrie Foundation, and I organize heavily with Olympia BDS.

***WIP:** What are the origins of the Maia Mural project?*

Alicia: The Maia Mural Project began with Break the Silence, an organization centered in the Bay Area and directed by Susan Greene. Susan has created a lot of murals in Palestine, in both the West Bank and Gaza for many years. When she heard about the killing of Rachel Corrie and the continuing efforts of the Olympia-Rafah Sister City Project she became interested in working here in Olympia. She proposed the Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project. The ORSMP works to make visible the relationships that exist between the community of Olympia, and the community of Rafah, and also the community of social justice organizations nationally and internationally.

The Maia Murals Project is really the second part of the Tale of Two Cities: The Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project. The overall goal of the project was to build relationships and to paint a mural in Gaza as well.

"We were painting a mural a day, pretty much. There were graffiti and spray paint artists with us, from the States and from Gaza. They would sketch the designs on the wall. Then everyone would tackle the wall with brushes and acrylic paint. It was amazing to watch each mural come together at the hands of so many different people."

Hilary: We also partnered with the Estria Foundation's Water Writes Project, based in Oakland, California. The Water Writes project is a series of ten collaborative mural projects focusing on water issues in communities across the world. Through the use of Twitter and other social networks, this project is creating a space for global conversations about the issue of water through art, creativity, and collaboration. So far they've completed murals in L.A., Oakland, Hawaii, and while we were in Gaza there was also a crew in the Philippines.

Andrew: As a theme for collaborating between ORSMP and the Estria Foundation and the Water Writes Project, the series of murals in Gaza were painted at the sites of water-desalination units that were installed as part of the Middle East Children's Alliance's Maia water project. "Maia" is the Arabic word for water. MECA went to the children in Gaza and asked, "What is the one thing you want the most? What can we bring you? What can we give you?" At the different schools and kindergartens throughout Gaza, they said "Clean water. We want to be able to come to school and have clean water to drink." So MECA started a campaign to raise funds in the United States to install these desalination units at schools and kindergartens throughout Gaza. That's a continuing campaign to build as many of these units as possible throughout Gaza. And all of the murals we painted are at the sites of these purification units, or at sites where these units will be installed.

***WIP:** How did you get involved?*

Alicia: I became connected to Palestine through working on the Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project and with the Rachel Corrie Foundation. I was drawn to this project, mostly because of its scale, ambitious goals, and my passion for murals. Through the ORSMP I started to build relationships with artists in Gaza and the West Bank. I started getting to know them mostly through the work they sent for the Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural. Originally we planned to bring artists from Gaza to Olympia to collaborate on the mural, but they were not allowed to leave Gaza. We then invited artists to send digital files of their work through the Internet, to then print and install on to the mural. Because artists weren't able to come here, it increasingly meant more to me to go there and meet the people I had been working with in order to better see and understand the situation. There was a handful of artists I was finally able to meet going on this trip. I wanted to continue building relationships with the people I had connected with through the ORSMP, and as an artist, I was excited to work with other artists to create the Maia Murals.

Hilary: Like Alicia, I was really excited to meet the artists and organizers who are a part of the ORSMP. I was invited to go, and I couldn't really *not* go. Like I said before, I became connected to Palestine through the mural and my work with the immigrant community. There are so many connections between these issues; the militarization of our borders and communities, the construction of huge institutionalized barriers, and the mainstream messages that target a specific community in order to create fear. As an activist and media maker, I was intrigued by the opportunity to really see for myself what's going on and to be a witness to the reality of the occupation. It was an amazing opportunity to build relationships through creativity and art, to connect across barriers of language, culture, and most importantly the blockade and the siege on Gaza.

Andrew: The idea of visual art as resistance has always been very intriguing to me. My artistic expression is music, but I've also really envied people who have other mediums, and I was really interested in seeing how that manifests itself. I've always been so impressed by the Sister City Mural Project and other forms of art as resistance. So I was really intrigued by that. Looking back on it, I'm really thankful for being able to learn so much from some of these artists that were on this delegation, because they're absolutely incredible. And then of course, being able to collaborate with the artists from Gaza was amazing as well.

***WIP:** Tell us about your trip, and the work you did.*

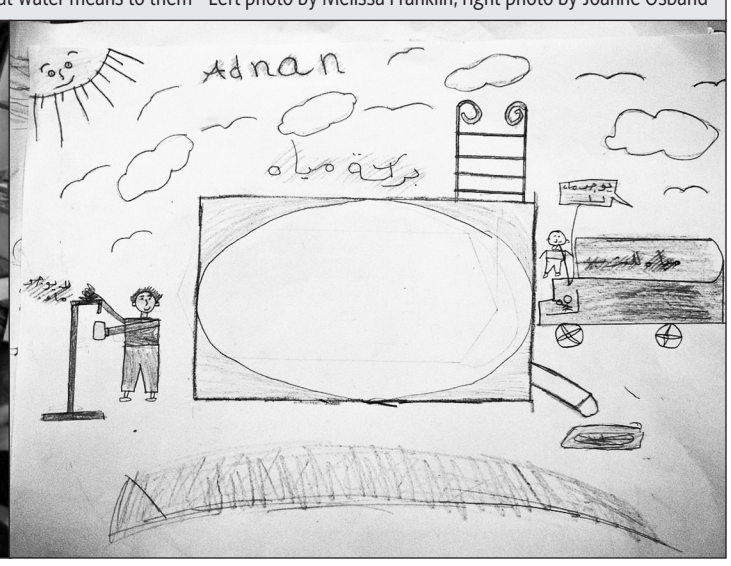
Alicia: The Maia Mural Brigade is a group of artists and activists from Olympia, L.A., the Bay Area, and Lawrence, Kansas. We toured the West Bank and met with people and organizations. When we traveled to Gaza, we created the Maia Murals. We created a series of eight murals in eight schools about issues surrounding water. We held workshops with kids, and we asked kids to draw pictures about water, and left it very open. Kids painted a lot of pictures depicting the water crisis. Pictures of sewage plants being bombed, and sewage spilling into the sea, fish dying, or people trying to fish in the sea and air strikes coming down.

Hilary: Kids playing on trash-filled beaches. Kids painted pictures of people retrieving water from water tanks on roofs and drinking from the water purification units.

Alicia: The kids also drew a lot of hopeful pictures about water. Kids drew pictures of their mothers watering their gardens, or having clean water to drink, or swimming pools being filled with water, or a happy sun and rain. So there were a lot of hopeful images, too.

When we went into the schools to look at the walls we were going to paint, we talked with teachers and administrators. People were so nice and excited that we were there. They were the nicest mural landlords I'd ever met! Because it was a school, they wanted positive and hope-

Children at Afaq Jadeeda Children's Center in Nuseirat, Gaza, drawing pictures of what water means to them - Left photo by Melissa Franklin, right photo by Joanne Osband



"Water is a human right" - The Maia Mural Brigade's first mural, at the New Gaza School for Boys - Photo by Joanne Osband

ful murals about water. They didn't need murals describing how terrible the water crisis is in Gaza. The kids know all about that. They wanted images that the kids would *like* to see. So that really set the stage for a lot of the murals that we painted.

Hilary: We were painting a mural a day, pretty much. We were working really fast. There were a few graffiti and spray paint artists with us, from the States and also from Gaza. They would sketch the designs out on the wall. Then everyone would tackle the wall with brushes and acrylic paint. It was amazing to watch each mural come together at the hands of so many different people.

Alicia: It was a really cool collaboration. Given the different mediums, brush paint and spray paint, we were able to move really fast, and it made it easier for a lot of people to be involved. Also, we had kids work on most of the murals. Sometimes we would facilitate a group of kids from the school to paint, and other times we would have kids walk up from the street, and we'd find ways for them to be involved. We worked with so many amazingly talented artists from Gaza! Two artists in particular were well-experienced graffiti and spray paint artists, so that was a cool collaboration. It was pretty amazing the way they all worked out!

WIP: *Tell us about some of the murals you painted.*

Andrew: One of the murals we painted was at the site of the desalination unit at a kindergarten in Rafah. The funds for that particular unit were raised by the Rachel Corrie Foundation. Of course, Rachel was killed in 2003 in Rafah, protecting the home of a Palestinian family from demolition. And so that particular mural, and that day itself, was a pretty heavy day. Earlier in the day, I had traveled around Rafah with Adnan Abu Al Su'ud, who works with the sister city project in Gaza, and also Khaled Nasrallah, who lived with his family in the home that Rachel was protecting when she was killed. Khaled took me to the site where the home used to stand, prior to going to where the mural was to be painted. So it was a pretty heavy day.

But when we got to the kindergarten, the painting started. The idea was for Mohammed, who was a local artist from Gaza who's an incredible spray-paint artist, and especially incredible in his portrait work, to paint a portrait of Rachel using almost all spray-paint. I think he used a brush just on the eyes. As soon as that decision was made, I became really excited, because I'd seen some of his images of his other portrait work. He's absolutely amazing.

Some of the work Rachel did when she was in Rafah centered around water. When Rachel was in Rafah, it was a much different situation than it is today. Some of the challenges are not the same. One of the challenges that folks in Rafah faced at that time was that the IDF was systematically sabotaging peoples' ability to maintain a water supply and to access that water supply. So, whether it was shelling wells and water tanks, or at one point, there was complete destruction of greenhouses and the facilities to bring water to those greenhouses. So Rachel and other ISM activists spent time guarding these wells, using their privilege and their international passports as what cover they provided to protect these water sources. That was another large part of Rachel's work when she was in Rafah. And although that was many years ago, it flowed right into the work that we felt was important to do in 2011. So that was a big inspiration for that particular mural.

Hilary: We were in Gaza at a time when there were thousands of activists flocking to Gaza on the Flotillas and Flytillas in order to break the siege on Gaza, to no avail. I felt very privileged to be there at that time. The fourth mural that we painted was at a kindergarten in Beit Hanoun, right along the buffer zone, where Alice Walker had donated a water purification unit. Since Alice Walker was on the US Boat to Gaza, carrying letters and messages from the US to Gaza, we painted a mural, "To Gaza with Love," dedicated to the flotilla to ensure that the messages of international solidarity would reach those in Palestine. We painted children on birds leading the way for the bright and colorful flotilla with the banner, "To Gaza with Love." Behind the boat were bottles floating in the sea with messages of international solidarity: "Water is a human right" "End the Siege," "Free Gaza." And there was Arabic in every mural. We were blessed to work with Mohammed, an amazing spray paint artist whose Arabic and calligraphy was beautiful.

A mother and daughter pose together in front of the mural painted at a girls' kindergarten in Rafah, Tuyor Al-Jena, Um Al-Nasser Kindergarten - Photo by Josue Rojas

Alicia: A lot of our use of water and images of water were symbolic. In this mural we used the image of water, and the boat, as a symbol of international solidarity - delivering messages, like Hilary said, connecting to Gaza, and using water to physically enter Gaza and break the siege.

***WIP:** How severe is the water crisis in Palestine right now?*

Alicia Martinson talks with the children at the New Gaza School for Boys in Gaza City - Photo by Hilary Hacker

Andrew: Israel controls every aspect of the water supply for every person, whether they be Israeli or Palestinian, in both the West Bank and Gaza. But as with most things, in the West Bank and in Gaza, the situation is dire in a lot of ways, but also much different.

In Gaza, the primary contributor to the water crisis is the blockade and the siege. But as with other aspects of the occupation, it's multi-faceted. So you have overpopulation caused by peoples' inability to leave and move freely, because of the blockade and the siege. So that's one layer of the issue. You have water treatment facilities and wastewater facilities that were bombed and destroyed, especially during Operation Cast Lead, so military strikes on that overpopulated and besieged area is another layer. Those attacks have left these facilities unable to treat the water at the rate that it should be. And of course the blockade, not allowing reconstruction materials to come through, and not allowing people to rebuild these facilities, is another layer of the water crisis. Not only are the mechanisms to fix this crisis broken, but they're not able to be repaired. And of course, this is all by design. Especially in Gaza, these different layers of the water crisis are just part of the larger picture, the larger movement by the Israeli government to systematically control every aspect of peoples' lives in Gaza, but also to systematically destroy, to whatever point Israel can maintain politically, to destroy these peoples' ability to survive. So what you're left with then is that 90% of the water that's pumped in Gaza is unfit to drink. The water crisis is the reason why we've come to Gaza to do this work, but of course it's just another item in the list of ill effects of the occupation as a whole.

The situation in the West Bank is much different. In the West Bank, you don't have the blockade, but you still have occupied territory, in a much different way. Israel still controls the water supply. It's really disturbing, but you'll go to an area in the West Bank, where you'll literally have a Palestinian neighborhood, and right next to that is an illegal Jewish-only settlement. And in the Palestinian neighborhood, you'll see these gigantic black tanks on the roofs of the buildings, and those are there to hold water. In the settlements, you typically don't see those tanks. The reason for that is, Israel controls the water supply to the Palestinian neighborhoods, but all too often will just decide at any point to cut that access off. So Palestinians have to be able to store this water in order to ensure that they have water to use throughout those periods. That's not an issue in the settlements, because obviously Israel won't interrupt that service to the settlements.

And there are really absurd things that happen. There are areas where Israel sells the water back to the Palestinian municipalities at a profit, so they're basically diverting Palestinian water resources and then selling it back to the people that it belongs to. I mean, it's really absurd, and it's really hard to wrap your head around. You have instances where really violent, extremist settlers will go sabotage and destroy Palestinian water tanks in the West Bank. They will literally go rooftop to rooftop in neighborhoods and destroy water tanks. It sounds very surreal and very bizarre. Even being there and seeing it all, it almost doesn't seem like it could be a possibility that this could all be real, but it is. So, the water crisis differs between the West Bank and Gaza, but in the end, it's destructive in both places.

***WIP:** And you also spent a good deal of time in the West Bank, is that right?*

Alicia: We were in the West Bank for ten days. The first place we visited was Hebron. We had a walking tour of He-

▸ **MURALS,** continued on page 10

"Water is Life" - Bureij Girls' Elementary School, Bureij Refugee Camp - Photo by Hilary Hacker

▸ **MURALS,** continued from page 9

bron, and that was a really eye-opening experience. What we saw in Hebron I would definitely say was similar to apartheid. Some of the first things that stood out to me were Israeli-only streets. Even if there's a Palestinian house on that street, they wouldn't be able to access their front door. We watched mothers and children with strollers trying to get through the turnstile doors guarded by soldiers. There were Israeli checkpoints in the middle of the town, and the presence of the IDF was everywhere.

Andrew: To give a little context, Hebron is a very interesting case. Hebron is home to just over 500 Israeli settlers. They're known as the most extremist, typically the most violent settlers throughout the West Bank. You have a small number of settlers, and you have 2,000 IDF soldiers deployed to Hebron to protect those settlers, which once again, sounds just absolutely outrageous and crazy, but it's true.

In the Palestinian marketplace in the old quarter, you'll have a walkway, and on the right and left you'll have Palestinian owned shops – *old* buildings. These buildings have been there for hundreds of years. On top of that, you'll typically have some kind of Palestinian-owned home or apartment, and *on top of that now* sits dwellings for Israeli settlers. And the settlers throw items down onto the people below. Shopkeepers have installed chain-link fences, like a roof of chain-link fence above the walkways throughout the entire old quarter, so people won't be struck by things coming down from the roofs.

Alicia: As we walked down streets of the marketplaces, and talked to people who owned shops, they told us many stories about constant harassment, and about settlers buying property on top of these markets. That was my first eye-opening experience, hearing many, many stories about harassment, and then seeing it, in such a blunt way. And it continued to be that way throughout the rest of the West Bank. It was really appalling.

Andrew: After being in Hebron, I don't hesitate at all in saying what Israel is practicing is apartheid. Unequivocally, apartheid. There are roads where Palestinians and settlers walk on opposite sides of the road. We went to visit the Cave of the Patriarchs. Including our tour guide, there were twelve of us. He was the only Palestinian with us. You have to walk through an IDF-controlled checkpoint to get to the mosque at the Cave of the Patriarchs. Eleven of us went through with no issue. The IDF soldiers at the checkpoint held *his* passport until we came back to go back through. As the only Palestinian in the group, he was the only one who had his passport held. It's apartheid. They're practicing apartheid. Of course, there's other examples of that throughout the territories, but that's what I saw.

"Handala" graces the mural at Afaq Jadeeda Children's Center in Nuseirat, Gaza - Photo by Hilary Hacker

"After being in Hebron, I don't hesitate at all in saying what Israel is practicing is apartheid. Unequivocally, apartheid."

To read the rest of this interview, including the story of the family surrounded by the wall, being in Bil'in on celebration day, and how it felt to return to Olympia, please visit www.olywip.org.

For more information about the Maia Mural Brigade, visit maiamuralproject.org. Find the Maia Mural Brigade on Facebook & Twitter: @MaiaMurals.

Stop by the Olympia Rafah Solidarity Mural, at the corner of State and Capitol, during Arts Walk on October 6th & 7th!

Left: The Maia Mural Brigade collaborated with several local artists, some of whom were expected, and some of whom showed up unannounced - Clockwise from left: Jeje Alfarra, Mohammed, and an unknown woman - Photos by Hilary Hacker

Above: A mural dedicated to Rachel Corrie at a kindergarten in Rafah - Photo by Hilary Hacker

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THIS IS JUST ONE OF THE MANY "PROVOCATIVE" ART WORKS CREATED BY PALESTINIAN CHILDREN FOR AN EXHIBITION THAT WAS TO BE HELD AT THE MUSEUM OF CHILDREN'S ART, IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA. UNFORTUNATELY THE ART WAS SO "CONTROVERSIAL" THE EXHIBIT HAD TO BE CANCELLED.

Ken Marcus' campus jihad against "anti-Israelism"

Richard Silverstein,
Tikun Olan

Gary Tobin, the late and renowned Jewish demographer, founded an academic institute before his untimely death in 2009 called the Institute for Jewish and Community Research. I knew Prof. Tobin and studied his surveys of American Jewry with great interest when I was a fundraiser for Brandeis University, where he taught.

But I'm sorry to say that since his untimely death in 2009, the Institute, under the leadership of his wife, Diane Tobin, has taken a u-turn away from Gary's core academic interests. Ms. Tobin, it should be noted, has no academic background in Jewish studies, demography or any similar field. Now, IJCR has largely been turned over to the concocted academic field of "anti-Israelism." Academics and wannabes use the term as almost synonymous with anti-Semitism and hope that they can raise consciousness in the U.S., to the extent that so-called anti-Israeli attitudes on American campuses and elsewhere will gain the same stigma that anti-Semitism has.

Last June, the anti-Israelism field was dealt a hard blow when Yale University closed its academic program for the study of anti-Semitism and anti-Israelism because it had become too politicized (i.e. anti-Muslim and pro-Israel) and because few faculty members would collaborate with it or take it seriously. At a major conference organized by the program and its director, Charles Small, the main theme seemed to be bashing Muslims and warning of the threat Islam poses to Jews and the world.

A senior IJCR staff member, Ken Marcus, leapt to the Yale program's defense and called its closure an example of political correctness run amok. He all but claimed that the act by the University was due to pressure from Muslim pressure groups.

It's not surprising then, to find that Marcus is one of the key intellectual authors of a new campaign to exploit newly written federal civil rights statutes (Title VI) which forbid campuses from creating a hostile environment for various ethnic and religious groups, including Jews. Marcus and his friends at StandWithUs are uniting to explore campuses where they can apply their new theory. To do so, they must find campuses where they can recruit sufficient Jewish students to complain that they are afraid to be Jews on campus because of the environment of fear and intimidation created by pro-Palestinian groups.

All this will require a Department of Education that is sufficiently malleable to take all this seriously. Given Pres. Obama's need for the Jewish vote in the coming presidential election and his wish to be seen as uber-supportive of Israel, it isn't at all clear that Education officials will throw this nonsense where it belongs – in the garbage can. They've advanced farthest at UC Santa Cruz, where they've filed a formal complaint against the University. They recruited a junior lecturer (I wonder why they couldn't find a senior faculty member to take up the cause?), Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, to act as their sponsor on campus and filed the complaint in her name. Said lecturer actually wrote an article for the far-right American Thinker asking whether Jewish students were safe on campus. In it, she hails the groundbreaking research of "investigative journalist" Lee Kaplan, one of the stranger crackpots (along with Debbie Schlussel and Pam Geller) on the right-wing pro-Israel scene. I wonder if Rossman-Benjamin thinks publishing at American Thinker will add to the luster of her academic CV? The Department's Office of Civil Rights has agreed to open a formal investigation of her complaint against UCSC.

Marcus has repeatedly contacted an Evergreen State College faculty member who is known for his sympathy to anti-Occupation groups on campus. The former asked repeatedly by phone and in writing to interview the faculty member, seeking to know "his personal political views on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." He mentioned as well, that he'd already interviewed noted Jewish critics of Israeli policy, Noam Chomsky and Judith Butler, as if this might give the faculty member (who isn't Jewish) cover. Marcus clearly intended to build a dossier which might be used to bolster any complaint brought against Evergreen. In short, this, for Marcus, is becoming a productive new venture. A Jewish campus jihad. We can expect a raft of such complaints against various campuses which allow protest against Israeli Occupation to be too vociferous for Marcus' taste and those of his wealthy pro-Israel benefactors.

Marcus and the academic pro-Israelists (two can play at this game, you know) also must recruit students who've been "damaged" or traumatized by their treatment on campus. So they seek out students who've transferred out because they felt there was a hostile climate for Jews. Students who've appeared in StandWithUs videos attacking Evergreen have spoken about anti-Occupation protests on campus as if they were personal attacks on their Jewish identity. They speak of trauma like a Jew might speak of trauma induced by anti-Semitism or Jewish suffering from the Holocaust. As I wrote above, this is all part of a master plan by charlatans like Marcus to build both an academic field and legal theory that equates criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism.

It is [Evergreen Hillel President Joshua] Levine's *extreme views* that cause him conflict with those on campus critical of Israeli policy. It isn't his yarmulke or his Jewishness. After all, many of the campus leaders of the anti-Occupation protests are Jewish themselves.

Like Daniel Pipes before him, Marcus is an ideologue clothed in academic robes. He has some academic pretensions, but his heart is pledged to Israel and not academe.

So why does Marcus persist when universities like Yale are dismissing them and their colleagues as lacking academic rigor? Because there's gold in them thar hills. Over $4-million worth (which excludes a $5-million endowment from Prof. Tobin's life insurance policy) according to IJCR's 2010 IRS 990 report. There are scores of generously endowed Jewish foundations like the Schusterman Foundation and many others which lap this stuff up. That's why Schusterman, for one, funds campus efforts of AIPAC. Their idea of building strong young Jews is by training them to espouse pro-Israel views. Secondarily, strong young Jews also learn that a major part of their identity involves detesting campus criticism of Israel.

The Marcuses of academia must not be allowed to succeed. If they do, then any of us, including and perhaps especially the Jews, will be consigned to the hellish Inferno of self-haters and Israel-haters. Anti-Israelism is a hoax theory perpetrated on academia and American campuses by a hoax theorist like Ken Marcus. He wants to stigmatize what is protected speech on campus. Not only should there be academic freedom on campus to express political views, there must be freedom of speech, an even more basic American right enshrined in our constitution. Students must be allowed to protest. It is part of a hallowed campus tradition. If pro-Israel students dislike the protest, let them mount their own—and they do. But to take speech critical of Israel and seek to punish an entire university for allowing it is simply *treif* and un-American.

Ken Marcus may be a lawyer with experience dealing with civil rights and constitutional issues, but his interest doesn't extend much beyond his own nose and his own co-religionists' (and even a narrow band of those, at that).

Oh, and I almost forgot to tell you why Marcus may think he's got a special "in" with the Department of Education in its review of these current and future civil rights complaints. He's a former litigator who also helped write, you guessed it, those new Title VI regulations which incorporated Jews as a protected group on campus. He did that when he worked for...the Department of Education during the Bush administration.

Consumer activists and peace activists are rightfully indignant about the revolving door between government and industry which permits a federal official to write a regulation that will impact a business and then go out and take a job at a company for whom he wrote the regulation. It encourages these officials to collude with potential future employers to write rules that will meet industry's needs, rather than those of the consumer. This is almost precisely what Ken Marcus did. He helped write a rule and now he's trying to exploit it for the imagined good of Israel and his poor, suffering pro-Israel students.

Marcus also boasts on his curriculum vitae that he is an official of Scholars for Peace in the Middle East, an inaptly named group which engages in heavy pro-Israel advocacy. He was staff director of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission under George Bush. You can tell whose civil rights he championed when he was there and whose he likely ignored.

On a separate note, Electronic Intifada reports that the president of the Evergreen campus Hillel is a StandWithUs Northwest Emerson Fellow. I have spent many, many hours of great Jewish enjoyment in campus Hillels at Columbia, UCLA and UC Berkeley. When I was there, these were houses that welcomed all Jews. There was a Hillel rabbi who took no sides in the Israel debate, but rather attempted to provoke discussion and learning, rather than exclusion. Until recently, this was true of Evergreen Hillel as well. It had been a place open to students with diverse views of Israel. But increasingly, Hillel is becoming a place where only certain Jews are welcome. Those who oppose the Occupation or support the campus divestment initiative no longer feel so. That's because StandWithUs, as Israel's Channel 10 news noted in its interview with [deputy foreign minister] Danny Ayalon, is an arm of the Israeli government, in effect a lobbying agent for a foreign power. Accordingly, Hillel is being turned into a cheering section for the Israeli government. This is an infinitely sad development for those of us who've known and appreciated the wonderful Hillels at campuses where we've studied.

The Hillel president, Joshua Levine illustrates the confusion SWU and pro-Israelists encourage between Jewish identity and support for Israel. [In an interview with MyNorthwest.com,] he said this:

> *"There are days I feel uncomfortable walking across campus alone because I wear a yarmulke on my head."*

There are many Jews wearing yarmulkes who don't support StandWithUs. Some who don't support the Occupation either. So the issue isn't wearing a yarmulke. That's an expression of Jewish identity. When you confuse Israel with Judaism you get into a terribly sticky wicket. It is Levine's *extreme views* that cause him conflict with those on campus critical of Israeli policy. It isn't his yarmulke or his Jewishness. After all, many of the campus leaders of the anti-Occupation protests are Jewish themselves. And Joshua Levine has no monopoly on Jewishness. There are many ways to be Jewish. In fact, as many ways as there are to approach the issue of Israel. Instead of suppressing this debate on campus, we should encourage it along with values of tolerance and civility.

www.RichardSilverstein.com

Olympia Jewish Voice for Peace

Olympia Jews Working to End the Occupation

Olympia Jewish Voice for Peace is a part of the diverse community of activists inspired by Jewish tradition to work together for peace, social justice, and human rights. As US Jews, we are aware of our unique roles in the non-violent struggle to end the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem conducted in our name and enabled by our tax dollars. We hope that by gathering our voices in community, we can contribute to the creation of a just and sustainable peace in Israel-Palestine.

Olympia JVP endorses the efforts of TESC Divest and the 2010 student-passed initiatives calling upon the Evergreen State College to divest from corporations profiting from the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands.The boycott/divestment/sanctions movement (BDS) encompasses a variety of tactics and targets. Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) rejects the assertion that BDS is inherently anti-Semitic, and we encourage discussion both within our own community and outside of it of the growing BDS movement. JVP defends activists' right to use the full range of BDS tactics without being persecuted or demonized.

In the process of our work, we have learned a few lessons about how our opposition operates: Silencing debate, confusing the facts, taking over student senates, making indiscriminate charges of anti-Semitism, criminalizing anti-occupation activism, implicitly or explicitly condoning widespread hostility against Muslims, Palestinians, and anti-occupation Jews.

We believe it is completely in line with Jewish tradition and ethics to directly challenge Israel's military occupation and the American institutions that support it. We draw from the history of countless Jewish communities and individuals throughout history who stood up against injustice whenever and wherever they were confronted with it. We believe that the Jewish tradition of *Tikkun Olam*, or Repairing the World, calls upon us as Jews to stand in solidarity with those facing injustice and we take that call to heart.

Join us in our work. For more information visit us at Jewishvoiceforpeace.org

Confessions of a Vipassana drop-out

Amy Levinson

So much life review is exhausting. I know now why we wait until the moment of death for our entire life to flash before our eyes in one second or less. It takes way less time. Kinda like waiting in line behind a person writing a check to the cashier, instead of using their damn debit card. Use the damn debit card lady and get outta my way. Umm, obviously Vipassana meditation did not help me obtain the expected results of staying calm!

They say that the future is imagined so don't even bother with that. The river that flows along the banks is not the same river that flowed one second ago, and won't be the same the next time you look.

The only truth is change.

When forced to sit in unnatural positions for long periods of time, even though admonished not to think, it's natural that unruly brain cells fire off hither and thither. Here I am at a Vipassana 10-day silent meditation, the latest and greatest rage of soul-seekers worldwide. Funny, it being one of the most ancient teachings of the Buddha, but you know, everything old comes around. Retro is where it's at. Even bell-bottoms, conveniently rebranded as "flares," that bane of the 1970s. Say it ain't so.

Tens of thousands of spiritually bankrupt sad-eyed people have been through Vipassana, taught worldwide at over 300 official centers and non-centers alike. If you count any type of spiritual seeker, or hip 20-something-year-old amongst your acquaintances, or even high-powered business professionals whose companies are forced to "rest-cure" these A-type personalities every so often before their hearts explode from the stress of working modern day capitalism, then you probably know someone who has taken Vipassana.

I remembered every single significant relationship from birth through present in glorious detail. It came to me like a string of pictures on my Droid 3 phone gallery. In Buddha's day maybe it came like a parchment scroll or writing in the sand of the earth. I remember each of my kids' three births. I thought to myself, as I was told over and over to remain calm, that Vipassana was obviously invented by a male. I was perfectly calm through more hours of childbirth than are included in the 10-day meditation course. A big bonus was I got fat, wet, squealy babies at the end; at the conclusion of Vipassana I got a sour stomach from too much boiled banana squash and a nasty taste in my mouth from it being closed for seven days of silence. Speaking of which--what do Buddhism and Zombies have in common...?

Being at a Vipassana meditation course is like incarceration in some post-modern old school zombie camp. It's confusing like that. On the one hand, I imagine what Buddhist monks and all ascetic types over the centuries were like, eyes turned inwards, looking soulless while trying to understand "soul." Students at this course come from different walks of life, lots of Earth-ship is leaving on 12-12-12 types and indigo children with pink dreads and brand new hippie shawls purchased at Hemp Fest. I knew I was in trouble the minute I saw the crumbly, non-yeast ginger tofu cookies and the averted dead eyes.

The moment when I saw my flow of consciousness – or my soul if you like – come to me, it looked distinctly like one of those tubes at the bank drive-up teller window. It was yellow and it shot down from my brain past my heart and deep into my belly. Unfortunately, dollar bills did not present themselves.

The moment when I saw my flow of consciousness – or my soul if you like – come to me, it looked distinctly like one of those tubes at the bank drive-up teller window. It was yellow and it shot down from my brain past my heart and deep into my belly. Unfortunately, dollar bills did not present themselves.

It had been a long strange trip to this point, four months on a journey using couchsurfing.net, staying at bizarre hostels in west Texas shaped like mushrooms, journeys into desert moonscapes in 105 degree weather to find water. Meeting activists in New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward who showed us the incongruity of Brad Pitt's "Make it Right" million dollar homes-- given to Katrina victims with no instructions on how to operate the solar panels and every other fancy-ass gadget, and finally landing at the folks' home in a retirement suburb of Orlando, Florida.

I feel far away from my northwest home in Olympia, Washington, *Time Magazine*'s "hippest city in the west," and the land of a million radical combat boot-wearing anarchists and rebels.

Dreaming up a way to make my current romantic relationship work, and in line with my belief in anarchism and non-hierarchical relationships, I insisted that a try at ethical non-monogamy might be the way to go. Hell, four divorces and one has to start thinking about doing something different. As I near 50, with a severe case of empty nest, skin dragging down, hot-flash future tripping, forced liberation syndrome from my roost, depression creeped insidiously in, like being slowly smothered in a wet sheepskin blanket, covering everything but my nose peeking out.

I created places on Facebook like "Dark and Gloomy" so I could check myself into it on my profile. I posted notes to myself on my profile such as "jealousy is really just a fear of abandonment"... Buck up Amy, get with the program of life! But what is life when one's identity is so radically altered--no kids, no protests to burn shit down, no Seattle political folksingers telling me why we should keep up the struggle, and one endless summer with sun like I haven't seen since I was a child in California. Maybe that is because I left the overcast Northwest in April to head south and that giant orb in the sky cursed me for months. Whoever heard of someone getting reverse seasonal depression? Only a Northwesterner could come up with that particular malady.

Come a few months later, Orlando. Just me and my two wiener dogs, and oh do I feel like a downtrodden old lady mess, a crazy dog lady, carrying a collapsible water bowl and a fanny pack with dog-doo bags--just what has my life come to? The handsome boyfriend, back in the Northwest, pursuing flirtatious fancies with my full permission, me saying to myself in an obsessive thought pattern... why...why...why, just what have I done. Who am I to become? Shall I drive my car into a tree? No, better not, it took me a damn long time to collect all my hip bumper stickers. Thou shalt not destroy such great sentiments--which brings us to Vipassana.

What better than to take refuge away from the constant battering to the brain from droids, pads, kindles, laptops, netbooks, fourteen million ringing buzzers than to go to a 10-day silent meditation course. Better yet, it's free. How noble – they feed you, house you, rebirth you and throw your observant ass back into the world as a perfectly calm person with no suffering. Hmm, now that sounds pretty good, but I had to ask my Facebook friends, because really, I had a couple hundred extra bucks and could just swing a plane ride to the Mexican Riviera to visit and swim in Dos Ojos Cenotes and hang on the white sand beaches of Tulum.

So, I asked my dear Facebook friends, those people who we know and love, those phantoms who we don't know at all but become dear to us cuz they check a "like" button on whatever witty thing we say. That's just so grand to have a fan or two. People "like" me...but there must be more to life, or else why do I feel like putting my head under a pillow all day long?

On my profile I asked "Vipassana or Cenotes?" You know, only one person voted Cenotes. Man, I shoulda listened.

I had heard from a spiritual teacher recently that gut instinct reaction is the right choice, your first intuition is your "emotional guidance" and mine chanted "silent meditation." I declare to you all right here and now, do not let me listen to my gut. Ever. Again. Tie me up... no better not, I might like that too much, just talk me out of it. One friend posted that he loved it, another said it was great, "no pesky chit chat."

Wow, I thought, that's just the thing! Lately I had been calling chit-chat "shit-shat," so it just dinged in my head-- Yes, that's it (unlike the Buddhist gong in my ear starting at 4 am, way worse than ANY cell phone ringing...but you will have to wait for that story).

This is how I found myself in Jesup, Georgia at the Southeast Vipassana Center, ready to fully commit to 10 days, (in capital letters and underlined in the brochure) and eager to practice "Noble Silence," where you don't talk, look at, gesture or generally recognize that anyone else exists. Great, no more telling my brain to shut up repeatedly, no more nasty interpersonal communications by endless obsessive text, Facebook, chat, landline, cellphone, or Burger King drive-up speaker. Yay.

Four a.m. wake up to meditate, with a couple hours' break throughout the day, bed down at 9. Fabulous. Oh wait, hmm, the teacher, S.N. Goenka, a prominent Indian businessman and addressee at both the U.N and the World Economic Forum, and the main proponent of Vipassana worldwide, would not actually be there. What's this, an audio-video, flat screen, plasma set up wired in at the meditation hall, or "Dhamma (meaning The Universal Law of Nature) Hall"? Drats, everything else was looking so voluntary-simplicity around here, so very plain and natural, cell phones turned in to management, no reading or writing implements, nothing but me, and hours upon hours of silent meditation, along with Mr. Goenka's wonderful heavily-accented audios and videos. Sigh.

During the first three days, we were taught "anapana" meditation for anywhere from 5-10 hours a day, during which audio incantations would be played throughout meditation. Goenka's incredibly low, soothing, hypnotic voice whispering over and over—"Feel the nose-tril, feel each nose-tril, each sensation in each nose-tril." Ok, yeah, it was the accent. It was indeed adorable, but really...my "nosetril"? I am being indoctrinated into a nose-mind scam. What exactly am I doing here? Is this the way out of menopausal urges for self-destruction?

After about three full days of this, I started feeling each nasal hair, and, do I dare say it, each booger. Since one is not supposed to move for each hour-long meditation, I spent a minimum of 15 hours silently and unmovingly meditating on how great a Kleenex would feel, how wonderful, an aloe-infused Kleenex, even a piece of toilet paper, yes, cheap gas station toilet paper. Whoops, back

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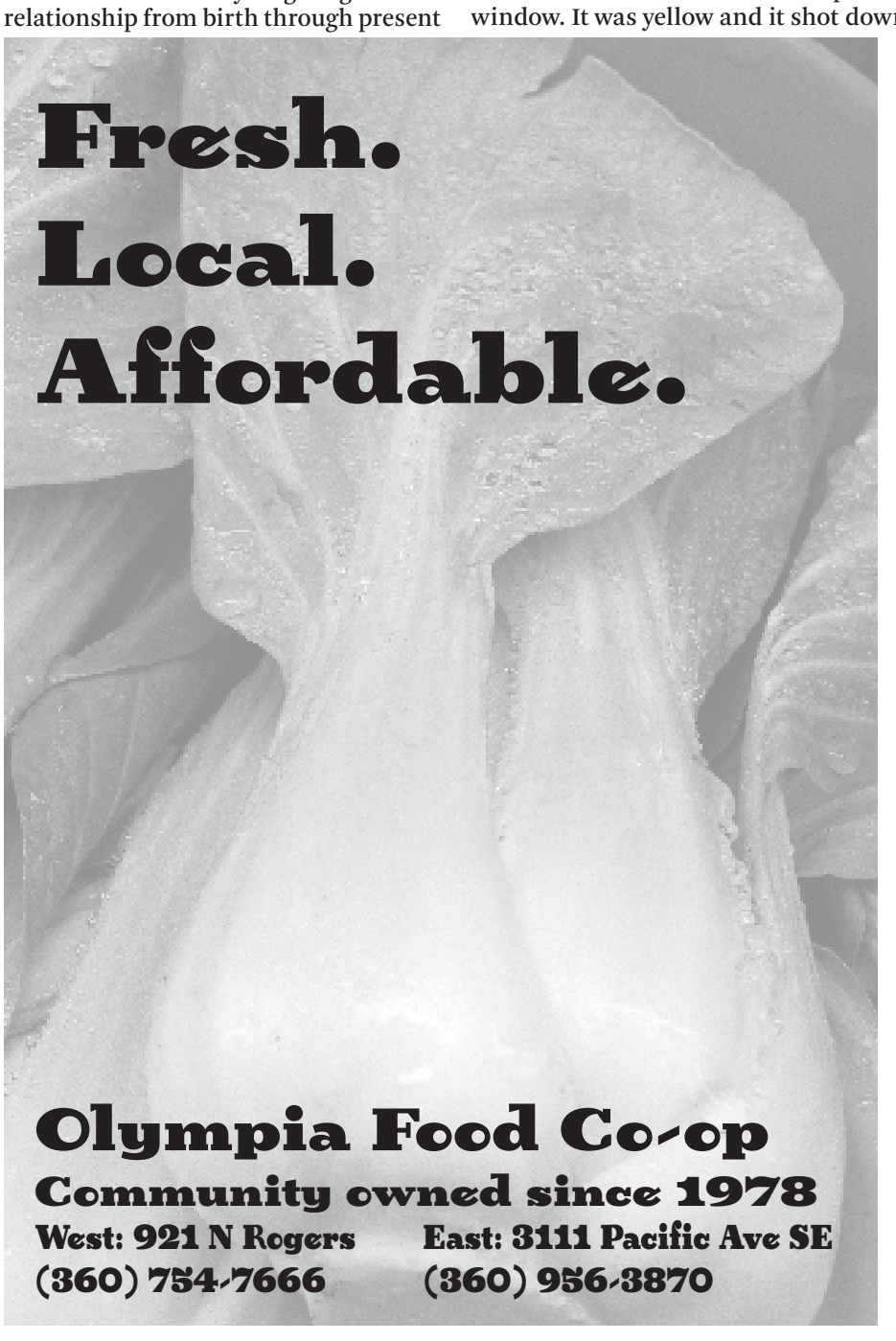

to the nose-tril.

Moving onto the actual technique of Vipassana meditation at a snail's pace, Goenka has now implanted into the brain a new word, to the order of saying this word at least 500 times by day five. I must remain "equanimous." It's the way, it's the core, the base of being a Buddhist and gaining insight. Plus, it's the only thing that I have heard in days and days. With all this damn Noble Silence I am hanging onto this word like a born again hangs onto Jesus. Remain Calm. After five days of hearing over and over to remain "perfectly equanimous," (which really is not a word according to Microsoft anyways—it's equanimity) for 12 hours a day, I heard a fellow meditator approach the assistant teacher at break and whisper, "What does that word mean?" The problem is, equanimous in an Indian accent sounds exactly like Equine-inimess. I spent seven days pondering what a good horse would do. I just could not delete it from my wiped-clean hard drive of a brain, every time he said it I heard, saw, felt, smelled Horse. How awkward.

We learned about stuff there alright. A noble truth in Vipassana is to "observe the misery." When one observes it, rather than doing something about it, one becomes noble. Call me codependent, call me a community grassroots activist, but I am quite happy to wrestle with the misery, pounce on it, pound it with all I got if it helps others out of their misery. My "observing" the existential inherent misery of our measly existence as a species is not going to make me feel good or help others. I imagine in Buddha's times, back in da day, one was indeed noble by even seeing and acknowledging the misery all around. So much of life was indeed misery that it must have gone unnoticed as a status quo truth of life. In the here and now, or as they say in Vipassana, in the present moment of my reality, things can and should be done. As the IWW union states as their motto, "Direct action gets the goods."

The problem of our existence has to do with our capacity to develop cravings and aversion according to the teaching. The solution is to become not ignorant... or aware. This is done in Vipassana by minute, endless observation of the body and each physical sensation, which creates an awareness of the mind-matter connection. If you understand that your body will urge you to cling to things which cause pleasant sensations, and run from things that cause unpleasant sensations, then you can reroute and stop all the forthcoming negative mental actions which occur--because you have no attachments anymore to anything. You're done. This is the universal law of nature according to Goenka.

By the sixth fevered day of hearing about how I need to destroy all cravings, particularly annoying thoughts started intruding on my nasal meditations. Thoughts of getting my nose pierced with a real diamond (conflict-free I might add). Thoughts of getting a giant yellow lotus tramp stamp tattoo, anything but this torture. A thousand needles on the ass would feel awesome compared to sitting in such a stone silent posture. This is what I assume Lot's wife felt like when she got turned to salt. I cannot move, I cannot move... Someone get a deer to lick me so I can feel a part of things again.

Right before I left for Vipassana, I confessed to my stepsister I felt I had no faith. Promptly and happily she invited me to come to her church, her pastor had just given a sermon on shopping addiction. That would probably have been pretty useful. By the fourth day of wearing my 78-year-old father's 78-year-old sweat pants sitting on a floor with 62 other modestly-clothed silent non-partners, a teeny ringing in the back of one ear, possibly from that most primitive part of the brain. It started chanting, "Find a Ross Store, Find a Ross store NOW." Annoying, to say the least.

Speaking of annoying, they fooled us the first night at the course. I guess I misread the web page when it said meals were provided for; dinner that evening was a delicious pile of curry and brown rice. I'm thinking, this might be good, this could really, really work. Good food, no cell phones, peace and quiet and voilà, a better Amy will be had in no time at all. Little did I realize that dinner was not included in the ticket....like any good Buddhist knows. Heck, what do I know, being a good Jewish girl, food is the mitzvah of life, a noble thing in and of itself, and a dangerous moral weapon in the hands of any Jewish gramma.

Okay, that's alright, if I get all sorts of yummy curry tummy before noon, I can make it, I reasoned. It's all good... ahh, peace and quiet. Well, let me tell you, there's nothing like a room full of 70 hungry meditators. This is not what I call quiet. Visceral rumblings, squeals of gastric frustration punctuated my inner mantra of joyless joy.

Awesome, the lunch gong. But wait, on the "female condiment table" (I wondered what the male condiments were, naughty me), came an assortment of stuff I haven't seen since I was an idealistic young raw foods vegan in the 1970s. Oh look, there's Bragg's liquid amino acids! How does this compare to ketchup, oh never mind, it has 16 amino acids and is "great on salads," so they say. This is a good thing cuz that was my diet for 7 days. So very organic, they left the dirt on, which I have nothing against, if it was only a freakin' potato. My body is yelling: "Carbs, carbs, give me carbs or give me death." But no, it's liquid amino acids for me, boiled banana squash and brewer's yeast with a wee bit of flax seed. Fortunately, I learned immediately that mixing a banana, at the promptly regulated 5 p.m. banana break, with raw sugar and honey reminds one of a candy coated...well, never mind, we are not supposed to be thinking of that.

A noble truth in Vipassana is to "observe the misery." When one observes it, rather than doing something about it, one becomes noble. Call me codependent, call me a community grassroots activist, but I am quite happy to wrestle with the misery, pounce on it, if it helps others out of their misery.

But I did. The technique of Vipassana meditation, a 2,500-year-old practice is all about recognizing body sensations (if you can tune out your own stomach howling "feed me"). After three days of meditating on the tip of my nose and the Kleenex that I was craving, we moved onto body scans of one's entire body, starting with each individual part, like shining a flashlight per every square epidermal inch and feeling the sensations. I had no problem with this. I got a distinct buzzing every time my mind moved over each part, so much so that by the time I was down at my private parts, well I admit to getting a bit turned on. This cannot be so!! I am sooo stuck in this damn body. Ahh, what would Buddha think, what would he do. Did he ever get an erection after he became enlightened? This must stop immediately, back to hours on the nose, much safer.

I remembered things I had not thought of, I saw my childhood in flashing images, I went all the way back to my nursery. I distinctly saw a wall decoration of orange and blue balloons, then darkness descended and I felt inchoate fury and rage. I observed this in my body as fear in the pit of my stomach. Why did she leave, who are these people wiping my butt with a cold wet thing? Diaper wipe warmers did not exist in the 1960s, damn them—this obviously caused me a lifelong complex, along with my mother's immediate hospitalization for what is now known as post-partum depression.

I went back and into my mother's womb. It looked just like a deli-wrap sandwich viewed through sun-darkened tinted transitions lenses, gloomy and with distinct wrapped layers...or maybe I was just hungry and hallucinating. It felt good.

That is what the mediation is about, observing the "aversion,"the fear and hatred of the unpleasant and observing the "craving," the clinging and compulsion for the pleasant. Becoming experientially aware that all this craving and aversion is about attachment to things. Misery is always present when one has attachments. That is because they are never real, they are in the past, which doesn't exist, or in the future which is also not around today. Man, someone make this planet stop spinning so fast. After this I need a giant yellow bumper sticker affixed to my forehead that says REMAIN CALM. Perfect equanimity, just like the horses do.

I was told by a friend I could ask for a chair, but when I asked I was told that I would be brought to the "teacher." Ruh-roh, my bad. I kneeled before a very pale, very vegan (muscle atrophy), very alien-looking fellow and he told me that I would get a lot more out of this if I could sit on the floor. Yeah, okay fine, I'm a menopausally-induced sucker for punishment at this stage. Beat me, hit me, at least I will be distracted from my pity party.

This is the very moment when I assume I got on the bad girl radar (thats "Buddh-ar" to you). Those damn Buddhists would follow me around; every time we were sent to our rooms to meditate, the manager would come in, just when I was settled into some deep non-thinking and bang a gong in my ear. This is not nice. Is there a sect of sadist Buddhists. Saddhists?

No, this cannot be. She caught me going pee-pee and told me I needed to get back to meditating on my bed. Oh, at least I heard someone speak, how nice after days of silence. Perhaps I shall misbehave some more and go poop. Would I get a double gong? Sexxy.

On the seventh day, she came in three times to bang the gong in my face, after eyeballing me like she knew I was actually there, which is against the damn rules. Eight silent women and one bathroom has its own set of horrors, but we were strictly told meditation time is just that – this is not a holiday. Silence, modesty and no unnatural chemicals prevail in the Code of Discipline handed to us upon our arrival. My non-roommates had showered during meditation time, spraying lemon verbena body scent all over themselves. I am sure one may have even snuck in lavender body wash, damn their eternal souls. Generally being bad little Buddhists, but no, this manager came up to me all curled up in nice non-thoughts of yin/yang and banged that damn gong in my ear one too many times. I'm done. I'm gone. Take that last piece of moldy tempeh and shove it up yours. I didn't eat it anyway.

I need to leave right now before I actually slap a Buddhist with all that regurgitated baby rage this damn meditation has brought forth. When brought before the teacher, the only thing I had to say after seven days of complete silence was "I am HOSTILE." Seeing the teacher cringe, I felt bad. I think he may have thought I had fashioned a shiv out of a recyclable bottle of natural cleaner spray.

Five pounds lighter and way, way happier, over my depression and hitting the Georgia back roads, no one told me I should think twice about driving in the Bible Belt boondocks with a bumper sticker that states "Jesus Christ, the beloved socialist hippie," but hell, I am free. Free to go to Ross, free to tell my man what I really think and how much I AM attached to him. Free to crave and avert--the holy duo of life. Something they seemed to neglect in their silent calculations, our deep attachments are responsible for items such as the ongoing survival of our species, passion and love and all the great classical poetry and classic rock songs these emotions engender, and our innate and instinctual need to keep our children safe. Small things, but essential for everything in life.

Freedom. I turn on the Sirius XM Grateful Dead channel and on blares "I need a Miracle every day"...the particular verse being "too much of everything is just enough." Oh how I can relate. Give me life and joy, depression, sadness, happiness, and let me participate in it, not observe it, cuz that is the stuff of the miracle of our existence. It certainly has nothing to do with my nose.

Attachment is misery, so they say. They chant it and make light of it...isn't this chant enchanting? Har har. Anything is amusing after sitting in weird postures for eight hours or more a day. Why exactly did the Buddha have no attachments? He left them. He walked right out on his wife and kids to hit the open path. I mean, how the hell did they feel about it? Did anyone ever ask?

If not forming attachments is the natural law of the universe...or the universal law of nature (I am just soo confused, just please say one thing, not two different things to my simple, stripped-down neurotransmitters), then tell that to my two wiener dogs—whom upon my arrival went nuts, licking every inch of my face and curling up, one spooning my butt, one spooning my stomach...in the perfect yin-yang formation hallucinated from my seven days as a Buddhist zombie.

TC PRO-NET
Thurston County Progressive Network
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Sign-up for the *Pro-Net Picks Events Newsletter*
www.tcpronet.org

The Showdown at Suncadia

On Wednesday, September 21, Governor Christine Gregoire traveled to Suncadia Resort in Cle Elum, to meet with members of the Association of Washington Business, a big business lobbying group. Among the corporate executives in attendance was Phyllis Campbell, the top regional executive for JP Morgan Chase. Chase enjoys extensive tax breaks, despite receiving billions in taxpayer subsidies and bailouts, and yet has drastically reduced lending to small business, which is necessary to rebuild the economy.

Under the organization of Washington Community Action Network, activists from all over Washington descended on Suncadia to protest this exclusive access, and demand policies that benefit the people, not the profits of a few. Solidarity protests were also held outside Chase branches in Seattle and Spokane.

"Jobs, Not War" Forum Features Speakers and Workshops

Saturday, November 5, 1:00-4:00 pm

Olympia F.O.R.

The public is invited to the "Jobs, Not War" forum on Saturday November 5 to focus on cutting the U.S.'s excessive military spending and using the savings to create jobs and fund human needs. The event will run from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. in Koinonia Hall at First Christian Church, 701 Franklin Street SE in downtown Olympia.

A three-person panel will address the issues, and small groups will plan a variety of ways to build the movement to accomplish the goals. A skit written and directed by Holly Gwinn Graham will help us enjoy focusing on the issues.

Washington State's people have spent $28 billion on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in the past ten years. Meanwhile the State of Washington is slashing funds for teachers, health care for the poor, and jobs. We must connect the dots and reverse those budget priorities.

The event is sponsored by the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) as part of the **"Bring Our Billion$ Home"** campaign organized by the Western Washington FOR (www.wwfor.org) and the Olympia FOR (www.olympiafor.org). The campaign calls for big cuts in military spending and bringing the billions of dollars home to create jobs and to fund education, health care, sustainable energy, and other human needs. Overall, we must convert from a war economy to a peace economy.

The event is free but donations will be invited to cover costs and support the Olympia FOR's "Bring Our Billion$ Home" campaign.

The Olympia FOR has worked in many nonviolent ways for peace and social justice since 1976. The Western Washington FOR has worked even longer at the regional level. Both are part of a national and international pacifist organization that has been active since 1914 in Europe and 1915 in the U.S.

For more information contact Glen Anderson at (360) 491-9093 or glen@olympiafor.org or visit the Olympia FOR's website, www.olympiafor.org, where the "Bring Our Billion$ Home" campaign has its own page.

▸ **TULIP,** continued from page 4

other two, for two more overdraft fees, so you get hit with as many overdrafts as possible.

Predatory lending has also become a big industry.

Johna: You have title loans with 122% interest, and balloon payments at the end. If you go drive past pawn shops now, they actually have *cars* out there now, for sale.

Eric: They give you an interest percentage, but you may not know what that means over the life of the loan. People lose their cars over hundreds of dollars, over short-term loans.

Johna: Another danger is, if you go into a tax return place, they offer you a "Refund Anticipation Loan" (RAL). They give it to you on a card, "Here you go." But you get fee'd $3.50 every time you draw your money on that. You're already being fee'd for getting the RAL on a card, and then they fee you every time you use it. They make money on low-income people who want money back immediately.

Eric: There's payday loans. There's rent-to-own. There's a lot of "credit-like" things out there. And there's new things all the time.

Eric and Johna especially stressed the dangers of payday loans.

Eric: Part of the way payday loans work is you tell yourself, "I'm only paying $25 on this $100 advance." But you're really paying thousands of percent a year in APR. But they've come out with new regulations. Now they have to state what the percentage actually is.

Johna: There's also new regulations that limit the maximum that can be lent. I've seen a lot less people coming in with payday loans, because the regulations are stricter now.

Eric: Tulip does not offer a payday loan product, but that's definitely who we're competing with.

Of course, Tulip's mission is about more than just helping low-income people avoid the dangers of predatory lending. Tulip provides personally-empowering financial services to the people who need them most.

Eric: You could go as far as to say that personal finance is *intentionally* complex, in such a way that average people can't figure it out. There's a disproportionate power dynamic between someone who knows the system, who knows the ins and outs of these policies, who knows how to do financial spreadsheets with Excel, and someone on the other end of the table who just wants a car, who doesn't understand why they would need to pay more than the minimum payment on a loan.

Johna: People walk into a bank, and they just want to know "Will you get me a car?", and "How much do I pay?" It's not that simple.

Eric: A really interesting exercise is to call up a payday loan place. Just call them up. They care so much, they'll talk to you. They'll build a personal relationship, they'll call up your building manager and make sure he knows the rent will be taken care of. They make you feel like a king. I just wanted to call them up again. That's their deal. That's how they do it. They're just really, really friendly. And expensive. And people don't get it.

Johna: Because it's easy. Because people aren't being questioned. Because they don't get lectured. They just get their money. The biggest difference with us is, we're not going to offer services you don't need, or aren't going to understand. If we offer you something, we want you to have it, if it's something you need. At larger financial institutions, people get stuff just thrown at them at the door, and all it does is eat away at their assets.

Next month: *Eric and Johna discuss fiscal democracy, the cooperative nature of the credit union community, and how Tulip Credit Union has endured our tough economic times.*

There's a disproportionate power dynamic between someone who knows the system, who knows the ins and outs of these policies, who knows how to do financial spreadsheets with Excel, and someone on the other end of the table who just wants a car.

▸ **CO-OP,** continued from page 1

What is not mentioned in the lawsuit, or the letters to the board, is that the five upset individuals have had numerous potential remedies at their disposal. Three of the plaintiffs – Kent Davis, Linda Davis, and Susan Trinin – ran for the board in last year's elections, and lost by a wide margin. (Trinin, who got the most votes of any anti-boycott candidate, finished 7th overall.) The plaintiffs also could have – and still could – initiate a membership-wide vote on the boycott simply by submitting 300 member signatures. However, having snubbed this opportunity for democratic review of the boycott, the five individuals have instead chosen to litigate. In their lawsuit, they claimed: "Plaintiffs have exhausted all means within their reach to obtain compliance by the OFC Board with their reasonable demands that the Board rescind the Israel Boycott and Divestment policies…"

Who's behind the lawsuit?

An investigative report by the website *Electronic Intifada* revealed a number of disturbing connections behind this lawsuit. Four of the five defendants had appeared in a propaganda video produced by StandWithUs, a major pro-Israel organization.

When asked by *Electronic Intifada* about the Co-op lawsuit, regional director for StandWithUs Rob Jacobs effectively claimed ignorance of the details of the case, saying "Since we're not actually a party to anything down there, frankly, we're not in any of the loop regarding the legal matters." However, *EI* discovered the agenda for an upcoming meeting of the StandWithUs Northwest Executive Committee, which was inadvertently posted online. One of the agenda sections included:

Project Status
• The civil rights complaint against Evergreen State College
• The law suit against the Olympia Food Co-op
• Working to shut down the "educational" programs that Ed Mast has circulated to all Washington State social studies teachers and librarians
• Speakers Bureau

In their agenda, StandWithUs listed the lawsuit against the Co-op as one of their "projects." Also of particular interest was the revelation that StandWithUs seeks to file a "civil rights complaint" against the Evergreen State College – another one of their "projects." StandWithUs backed a similar complaint against UC Santa Cruz, attempting to equate anti-occupation activism on campus with anti-Semitism, as a way of using civil rights protections to quash legitimate, non-hateful free speech critical of horrific foreign policies which StandWithUs approves of. IRS filings showed that in 2009 alone, StandWithUs spent $2.6 million on campus advocacy for Israel. (Source: *Electronic Intifada*)

Also listed as a StandWithUs "project" was a campaign to "shut down" the educational efforts of Seattle-based activist Ed Mast. Last December, Mast led an effort by the Seattle Mideast Awareness Campaign to buy ads on Seattle Metro buses which would have read "Israeli war crimes – Your tax dollars at work." These ads were cancelled by Seattle Metro after an extensive campaign by pro-Israel individuals and organizations to pressure Seattle Metro to silence speech critical of Israel. (For more information, read *The Seattle Metro bus ads: How the bullies got their way*, by Wally Cuddeford, in the March 2011 *Works In Progress*.)

A phony criticism that is often leveled against organizers for BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) is that they are outside agitators who operate in communities to which they don't belong – a claim which was repeated in the StandWithUs propaganda video featuring the plaintiffs. Ironically, when StandWithUs is having a meeting where they discuss "projects" localized in both Olympia and Seattle, it then follows that the organization is involving themselves in the affairs of at least one community other than their own.

As the agenda continued, StandWithUs Northwest's efforts were not even limited to Olympia and Seattle:

StandWithUs Northwest helping other regions
• Helping Avi Posnick in NY oppose the BDS boycott proposal at the Park Slope Food Co-op in Brooklyn
• Helping Gail Rubin in Davis oppose the BDS boycott proposal at the Sacramento Food Co-op in Sacramento

In another StandWithUs document, which was also inadvertently publicized, it was revealed that back in March, the plaintiffs and their attorney Avi Lipman attended a meeting in Olympia wherein they discussed their plan to sue the Co-op (along with another project they referred to as the "Evergreen strategy") with Seattle-based organizers of StandWithUs, as well as with Akiva Tor, the Israeli Consul General for the Pacific Northwest (who is based in San Francisco). When asked about the nature of their conversation with an Israeli government official, Lipman (who himself is based in Seattle) said the nature of their conversation with Akiva Tor was subject to attorney-client privilege.

What's missing from all this is the specifics of where the money is coming from to pay the legal fees behind this lawsuit and the "civil rights complaint" against Evergreen. Beyond the moneyed connections already established, nothing could be said for certain without further information. However, in an interview with Israeli Channel 10 news, Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon confirmed that the Israeli government is willing to sponsor lawsuits in the U.S. aimed at silencing criticism of Israel. (Source: Tikun Olam)

While the lawsuit against the Co-op has the fingerprints of StandWithUs and the Israeli consulate all over it, the five plaintiffs themselves are indeed longtime residents of Olympia. Jeff Trinin is the co-owner of Always Safe & Lock, and an active member of the business-interest Olympia Downtown Association. For years, he has openly advocated for various anti-homeless ordinances, as well for last year's elimination of downtown free parking.

What happens next?

It is doubtful that this legal action is intended to succeed on its merits alone. If it were, there would be more of an effort to make a substantive case, and to exhaust all alternatives prior to the lawsuit. At best, this is an attempt to harass and intimidate the Co-op board into reversing the boycott based on the insistence of five members. At worst, it is simply an attempt to punish the Olympia Food Co-op as a signal to other stores who would consider honoring the Palestinian civil society call for BDS against Israel. As Olympia BDS organizer Andrew Meyer said of the lawsuit, "We're all just shocked that the boycott opposition would risk closing the store just to make their point. It's disgraceful."

Washington State has a "Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation" (SLAPP) law to protect individuals from exactly these kind of frivolous lawsuits aimed at unfair censorship through legal and financial intimidation. In fact, RCW 4.24.510 entitles the target of a SLAPP suit to damages of $10,000. However, this will require the defendants to first endure the legal process until the case is dismissed.

When asked how this lawsuit affects the Co-op and the boycott of Israeli products, Staff Representative Jayne Kaszynski said, "We can assure you that this lawsuit will not diminish our commitment to the rule of law and universal human rights for all people."

WIP Announcements

Send in announcements to
olywip@gmail.com or
Works In Progress
PO Box 295 Olympia WA 98507

Regularly held events

PFLAG Olympia
2nd Sunday, 1-4 PM
Priest Point Park, Olympia

We will show and discuss a short film "Facts and Facets of Transgender Experience"

Drunken Poetry
Last Word Books
211 East 4th Olympia
3rd Monday, 7:30-9:30pm

Readings operate on a first-come first-serve sign-up basis. Details/requirements are complicated so check out the Last Word Books website for more information. http://www.lastwordbooks.org

Drinking Liberally
1st and 3rd Mondays of each month, 7 pm
Bally Hoo Irish Pub & Restaurant
316 Schmidt Place, Tumwater

Local chapter of loosely structured national organization dedicated to discussion of liberal and progressive politics.

Eloquent Jazz Latin Escapes with Momenti Rubati
Live Jazz every Monday, 7 pm
The Royal Lounge
311 Capitol Way N, Olympia

This special gathering of music lovers meets together to experience the magic and excitement of the Momenti Rubati. Live music unites a community together for festive enjoyment and social fun. We invite you to meet with us, make new friends and relax to the beautiful sounds of the Momenti Rubati. 705-0760 No charge.

"Around Thurston County"
Thurston County Television (TCTV)
Channel 22
Mondays, 6:30PM, Fridays, 5:00PM
(Locally produced civil affairs show with a progressive perspective).
Info: Patrickbabineau@comcast.net

Volunteers Needed to Sort and Box Medical Supplies
Providence Health Int'l / CHUMA,
2601 Willamette Drive NE, Suite G, Lacey

No experience is necessary. Volunteers must be at least 14. CHUMA Int'l (Catholic Health United for Medical Assistance) practices global solidarity and environmental stewardship by ensuring useful medical supplies and equipment are shared with charitable health-care organizations in economically developing countries.

Supplies are sent to Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Haiti, Cuba, Brazil, Uganda/ other countries. Help CHUMA's volunteer efforts. Ray Reyes 493-5641 raymond.reyes@providence.org

F.O.R. TV Program
Mondays at 1:30 pm
Thursdays at 9:00pm
Channel 22 - TCTV

If you live outside of Thurston County or if you don't have cable TV, you can watch over 60 of Fellowship Of Reconciliation's recent TV programs on your computer! Visit www.olympiafor.org then click the link for TV Programs and click any program you want to watch.

Memoir Writing Group
Tuesdays, 1-3 PM
State Capitol Museum,
211 21st Ave SW, Olympia,
360-753-2580

The Memoir Writing Group at the State Capital Museum has been meeting regularly for nearly two years. The group explores the past through writing and assembling their memoirs. Led by Delores Kelso Nelson, a writer and teacher in the Olympia area for over 15 years, the memoir class serves participants by igniting lost memories, supporting practicing memoir writers, and offering a chance to socialize. Cost is $6 per class or 5 classes for $24

Peace Vigil
NW corner of Sylvester Park
Wednesdays 12 pm: Legion & Capitol

Please come for all or part of the hour to witness in a very friendly way for peace and nonviolence. We provide plenty of signs. Olympia Fellowship Of Reconciliation has sponsored this since 1980. 491-9093 or glen@olympiafor.org

The Other Bank
Wednesdays 1:00-3:30pm
YWCA, 220 Union Ave SE, Olympia

The YWCA Other Bank provides free hygiene and cleaning supplies to families in need -- items that can not be purchased with food stamps and are not available at food banks, yet are essential for maintaining health and personal dignity. Items include: toilet paper, laundry and dish detergent, deodorant, shampoo, toothpaste, soap, tampons and pads, cleaning products, etc. 360-352-0593

PLEASE DONATE! Donations can be dropped off Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm

Stonewall Youth Support Groups
Wednesdays -- 705-2738
4:30-6:30pm for 21 and under group
7-9pm for 18+ group.

An organization of youth, activists, and allies that empowers lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQQIA) youth to speak for themselves, educate their communities, and support each other. Stonewall Youth envisions a community in which all queer, gender variant, and gender non-conforming youth have a full spectrum of choices regarding their bodies, self-expression, and legal rights. www.stonewallyouth.org info@stonewallyouth.org

Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace (OMJP)
Monthly Meetings
2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 7 pm

Work on a variety of global and local issues. Larry 866-2404 lmosque-da@comcast.net

"The Veterans Hour," locally produced by Veterans for Peace
Thurston County TV (TCTV) - Ch. 22
Wednesdays, 5 pm
Fridays, 9-10 pm

Info: Dennis Mills 867-1487 mills.dennis@comcast.net

"Parallel University"
Thursdays, 12 - 1 pm:
89.3 FM or kaos.evergreen.edu/

Informative programs about peace, social justice, the environment, progressive politics, and other alternative viewpoints. parralleluniversity@yahoo.com

Women in Black
Every Friday from 5:00 to 6:00 pm:
W. 4th Avenue, near the fountain

Women only. Please wear black. Some signs are provided. Women in Black is a network of women committed to peace with justice. Info: Karin 754-5352 kraftkf@comcast.net

Percival Landing Peace Vigil
Fridays, 4:30-6pm
4th Avenue and Water Street, Olympia

All welcome to come to witness for peace and nonviolence. We provide plenty of signs. The Olympia Fellowship Of Reconciliation has sponsored this since 1998.
491-9093 or glen@olympiafor.org

Bread and Roses
Saturdays, 1-5 PM
1320 8th Ave SE, Olympia

We have food garden! If you have a pickup truck, have yard tools to loan, are passionate about organic gardening or local food security, or if you just like doing fun projects with your neighbors, please join us! There are many ways to be involved. Saturday Supper at 6:00pm. Saturday Supper Bread & Roses' volunteer hosts serve a gourmet meal Saturday evenings. http://www.breadandrosesolympia.org 754-4085

Community Special Events

Innocent survivor from Death Row tells his story
Friday, September 30, 7 pm
United Churches Sanctuary
110 11th Ave SE

Juan Meléndez was released from Florida's death row after spending nearly 18 years for a crime he did not commit. Juan was the 99th death row inmate in the U.S. to be exonerated and released since 1973. The number currently stands at 138, according to the Death Penalty Information Center (www.deathpenaltyinfo.org).

Juan's story includes some common aspects of the death penalty's inherent injustices, including being imposed on people who are poor, brown-skinned, and innocent. But his story is profoundly personal. He survived with his human spirit intact despite the oppressive forces of dehumanization, degradation and death.

This event is sponsored by the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation's Committee for Alternatives to the Death Penalty. Contact Emily Hammargren, (360) 352-0695 deathpenalty@olympiafor.org.

ConsentFest Olympia
Saturday, October 1, Noon
Sylvester Park, downtown

Concerned about sexual assault? Please join us for workshops from community members that are planned around the themes of sexual assault prevention, survivorship, consent culture, and sex positivism.

The idea for ConsentFest (alternatively known as "SlutWalk") began in Toronto in April, when thousands rallied to protest the comments of a Toronto Police representative who blamed women for sexual assault by saing, "Women should avoid dressing like sluts in order not to be victimized." Since then, SlutWalks and ConsentFests have been organized in dozens of cities across the U.S. and Canada.

Sponsored by Partners in Prevention Education. Free childcare courtesy of Olympia Childcare Collective, located at POWER's offices: 309 5th Avenue SE Olympia, WA 98501. Please RSVP for childcare by emailing olychildcarecollective@gmail.com.

Protest the 10th Anniversary of the War on Afghanistan
Friday, October 7, 4:30 pm
Seattle Central Communinty College

Friday, October 7, 2011 will be the exact 10th anniversary of the U.S./NATO war on the people of Afghanistan. Hundreds of thousands of Afghani people have been killed, wounded and displaced, and thousands of U.S. and NATO forces killed and wounded. The war costs more than $118 billion per year- $330 million per day-at a time when social programs are being slashed. Jobs and education continue to be cut while the trillion-dollar military budget increases and corporations make record profits. Millions of people can't find a job. Stand up-Fight Back! Only the people united can make real change!

Organized by Seattle ANSWER. For more information, visit answerseattle.org, or email answer@answerseattle.org

Challenging Racism through Art and Activism
Friday, October 11, 7 pm - 9 pm
Traditions Fair Trade Café
300 5th Avenue SW

Join us for an evening with Palestinian spoken word artist Remi Kanazi and local poet Fabi Romero. The performance will be followed by a discussion with Dr. Nada Elia on the Palestinian call for a Cultural and Academic Boycott of Israel (PACBI). How is Brand Israel sold and packaged as Queer-rific, Feminist, Multicultural, and Progressive to hide human rights abuses against Palestinians? Why would someone protest and boycott the Israeli Philharmonic or Idan Raichal, but not Israeli filmmaker Rachel Leah Jones or Israeli playwright Juliano Mer Khamis? What are Palestinians asking anti-racist allies to do in solidarity for their equality?

For more information email ammurano@gmail.com

A Table for South Sound
Friday, October 14, 5 pm - 9 pm
Washington Center
Washington Street, between 5th and Legion

As part of Come to the Table: The Food Summit, we are hosting a potluck in the streets of downtown Olympia. Building on the tradition of Table for Olympia, we are inviting people from all over the South Sound to have a seat. Following the meal, we invite you to join us inside the Washington Center to be inspired by the words of Mark Winne, author of *Closing the Food Gap: Resetting the Table in the Land of Plenty*, and *Food Rebels, Guerilla Gardeners, and Smart Cookin' Mamas: Fighting Back in an Age of Industrial Agriculture*.

This event is hosted by Sustainable South Sound. For more information:
sustainss@gmail.com
sustainablesouthsound.org

Heartsparkle Players, with Northwest Sightseers
Friday, October 14, 7:30 pm
Traditions Fair Trade Café
300 5th Avenue SW

Each month, Playback Theatre and the Heartsparkle Players invite a guest artist, community organization, arts program or social service agency to be a part of our performance. Through this collaboration we acknowledge and honor the work individuals and organizations do in our community.

This month we will be collaborating with the Northwest Sightseers, a puppy raising club in Thurston County that raises puppies for Guide Dogs for the Blind. Guide Dogs for the Blind began in 1942 when a group of volunteers began raising and training guide dogs for the returning WW II soldiers who became blind as a result of their injuries. It is an excellent organization and has helped many visually impaired persons to become more independent.

Suggested donation is $5-10. No one turned away. For more information, call Debe Edden at 360-943-6772, or visit heartsparkle.org. To contact Northwest Sightseers, call Jennifer Johnson at 928-503-9252

COFFEE STRONG
VETERAN OWNED PRO-GI ANTI-WAR

Coffee Strong is a veteran-owned, veteran-operated GI coffeehouse. Veterans provide a safe place for soldiers to share the effects of disastrous wars, within 300 meters of the gates at Joint Base Lewis-McChord. The unique coffeehouse welcomes soldiers with a free cup of coffee. There is access to the Internet, an informative library, and many referrals are available to community resources, including GI Rights counseling and Veterans Benefits. Free legal and educational resources are available.

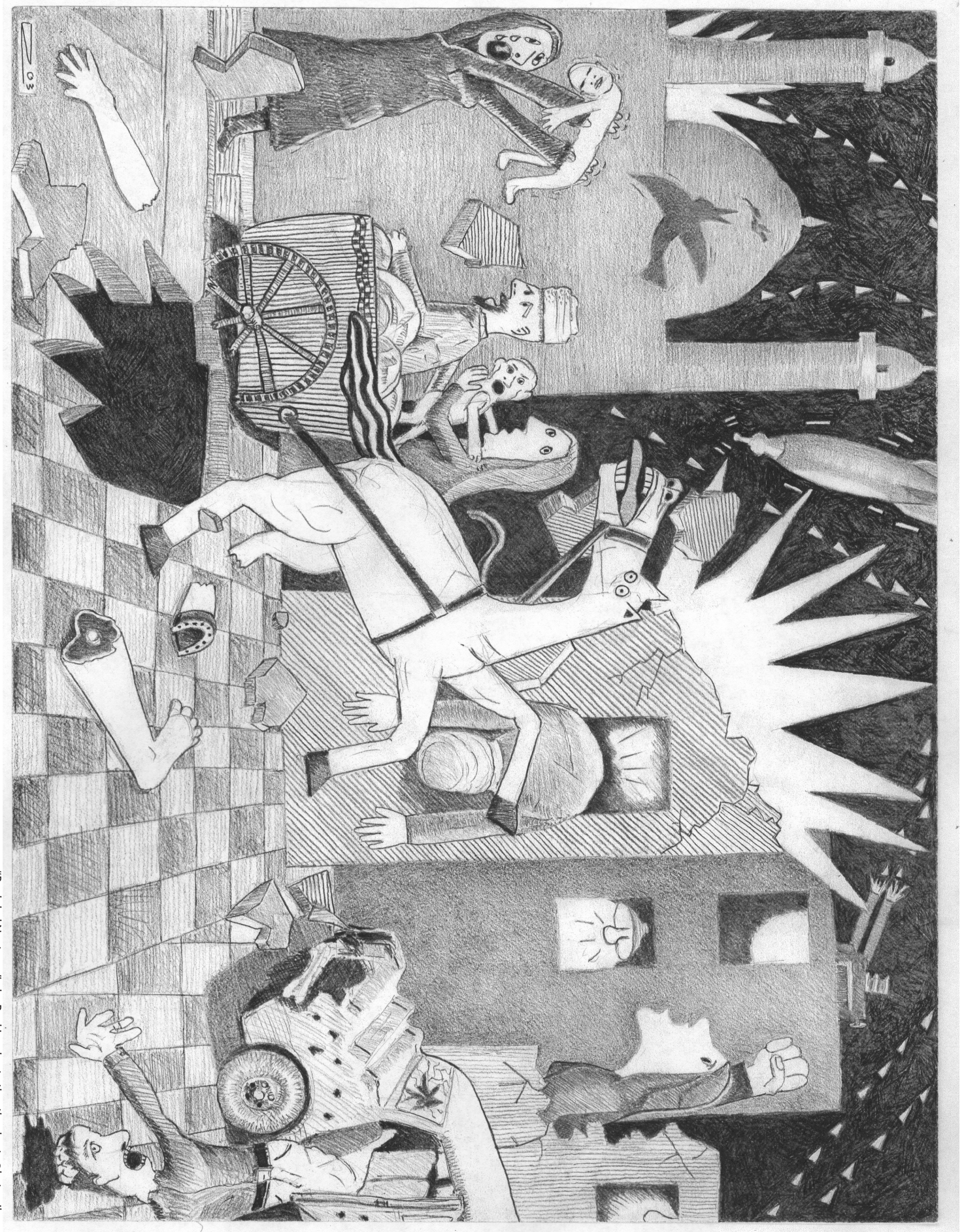
Coffee Strong Events in October

GI Rights Counseling
Sundays at 9am, and Tuesdays at 3pm
Call for more details, or visit coffeestrong.org.

Veterans Benefit Assistance
Fridays at 10am
Call for more details, or visit coffeestrong.org.

IVAW Meeting
Thursday October 6, and Thursday October 20
Call for more details, or visit coffeestrong.org.

15109 Union Ave SW, Lakewood WA (253) 581-1565



"Baghdad Nocturne" - by Paul Lambert - theptlamberts@hotmail.com

October 2011

FREE

WORKS IN PROGRESS

SERVING THE SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY OF OLYMPIA SINCE 1990